

The Extension of British Influence in and
around the Gulf of Aden, 1865 - 1905

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Abstract

In 1865, Aden was an insecure, undervalued, Indian outpost. Non-intervention in Yemeni affairs was official policy. British influence inland was non-existent; and in the Gulf of Aden it was declining.

By 1905, Aden was a major Imperial base, an international trading, shipping and telegraphic centre; and its population had doubled. Britain dominated the Gulf of Aden.

In 1866-67 Resident W. Merewether disregarded official policy and destroyed Fadhli tribal power. This benefitted Aden and the Abdali chiefs. The Abdalis expanded their territory and influence, as British clients. Britain purchased the Little Aden peninsula; and, when the Ottoman reoccupation of Yemen threatened the Abdalis, British pressure enforced an Ottoman withdrawal.

Strategic British requirements dictated the acquisition of more Abdali territory, in 1882, and agreements with Arabian coastal chiefs, between 1876 and 1888. By the acquisition of British Somaliland (1884-88), foreign bases were virtually excluded from the Gulf of Aden.

Official British policy in the Yemen interior from

1886 was to allow the reoccupation of the 'Amiri' area by the Ottomans, but successive Residents supported the Amir against Ottoman pressure. During the Boundary Commission (1902 - 1905), Aden officials circumvented their conciliatory India Office instructions, and with Lord Curzon's support and the Ambassador's co-operation at Constantinople, the Cabinet was bamboozled into an expansionist policy. The Ottomans were bullied into surrendering territory.

British expansion, notably between 1865 and 1888, was a triumph of character by the limited Residency staff over adverse circumstances, with occasional timely naval visits. It owed much to three Britons and one Persian-Arab. The acquisition of Somaliland was the personal achievement of Major F.M. Hunter.

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Note on the spelling of Arabic and Ottoman names, and on references

For simplicity, diacritical dots and the letters hamza and 'ain have been omitted. Thus the accepted English usage Aden is written instead of 'Aden.

Ottoman names and titles are spelt like the Arabic names and titles.

Some Aden file references give only the folio number and not the date of the letter. Some Aden files were partly termite-eaten and full details were therefore not always available.

References to published book titles are underlined, in single inverted commas, while article titles are in double inverted commas.

Abbreviations, for manuscript sources, are listed in an appendix at the end.

'Foreign Office' is used throughout for the British

Foreign Office; and 'Foreign Department' is used for the Government of India's Foreign Department.

Section 1.

Introduction

The area described in this thesis covers the southernmost portion of the Republic of the Yemen, the greater part of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and the adjoining part of Dhofar (1). The French territory of Afars and Issas, and the adjoining coastal region of the Republic of Somalia as far west as, and slightly south of, Cape Guardafui are also included (1). So is the island of Socotra (1). The area, in relation to Arabia, the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, is shown in Map A. During the period under discussion, the British used the term 'the Yemen' to describe the area between Asir and the Gulf of Aden (2). The Yemen was bordered by

(1) Introductory remarks to the Somali Coast, Socotra and Dhofar are given in their respective Chapters (6 and 5).

(2) E.g. Sketch map facing p.87,

F.M. Hunter's 'Account of the British Settlement of Aden', 1877, reprinted London, 1968. (Hereafter Hunter, 'Aden').

Maj. Gen. Maitland's preface, page x of G.W. Bury's 'The Land of Uz', London 1911. Maitland was Officiating Resident, Aden 1901 - 1904. (Hereafter Bury, 'Uz').

the Red Sea to the west and by the desert fringes of Hadhramaut to the east. Aden was a Yemeni port. The British habit of distinguishing between 'the Yemen' under the Imam, and 'the British Protectorate of Aden' arose after 1920. That distinction emphasized an artificial, political, separation between two parts of the Yemen. In Arabic, 'the Yemen' was applied originally to all the country on the right-hand side of an observer in Mecca looking eastwards. That included all S.W. Arabia. Subsequently, the district of Asir was distinguished as a separate area (1). Within the Yemen, a tribesman would refer to himself by his tribe, and a non-tribesman would refer to his village or town area, to describe his place of origin (2).

Hadhramaut lies to the east of the Yemen (3). The territory of the Bal Ubaid Confederation and of the Wahidi tribes forms the western boundary to Hadhramaut. To the north is the Rub ALKhali desert. The Gulf of Aden is to

(1) عسير 'the rough' is a mountainous area.

(2) Cf. N. Malcolm 'Five Years in a Persian Town', p.39-40, London, 1905.

(3) See Map A.

the south and the country of the Mahra is to the east. In 1936, Harold Ingrams, as First Political Officer at the Aden Residency, gave the local usage for the name as covering the coast between Balhaf on the west and Seihut on the east, and the Valley of the Hadhramaut and its tributaries in the interior (1). In this thesis the area stretches as far west as the Wadi Hajr only. Balhaf was the harbour for Azzan, the Wadi Meifaa and the Upper Aulaqi area to the north. Balhaf therefore properly belongs to the Yemen (2). Apart from the small and isolated anchorage and settlement of Bir Ali, the coast east of Balhaf is barren and empty. The Wadi Hajar therefore makes a fitting western border for Hadhramaut. To the people of S.W. Arabia the geographical and tribal borders of the Yemen and Hadhramaut were clearly defined. Strong local loyalties existed. Men's home origins were discernible by variations in dialect (3), and, to a lesser

(1) Colonial Office Publication No. 123, on Hadhramaut, H.M.S.O. 1936. p.7 (Hereafter Colonial 123).

(2) Ibid p.72. This usage is supported by the Aden Trade Registration Office's exclusion of Balhaf, and of Bir Ali to the east, from the list of Hadhrami ports.

(3) W. Thesiger 'Arabian Sands', Penguin reprint, 1968. p.152. (Hereafter Thesiger, 'Sands').

extent, in dress and behaviour (1). The Hadhramis, and the Bedouin to the north and the west of Hadhramaut, referred to the Bedouin inhabitants of Jauf and Nejran, collectively, as 'the people in the direction towards which prayer was made' (2). The Yemenis referred to the Bedouin, to their east, as 'the people of the sunrise' (3).

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The populations in the Yemen and in Hadhramaut lived under conditions that had changed little in the previous thousand years (4). Each community was organised on a tribal basis (5). There were well-marked social differences between the classes of the people. At the top were the tribal chiefs, who held their position so

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.45.

(2) اهل القبلة (Ahl AlQibleh) G.W. Bury 'Arabia Infelix'. London, 1915 p.32. (Hereafter, Bury 'Arabia').

(3) اهل المشرق (Ahl AlMushriq) ibid.

(4) H.F. Ingrams 'Arabia and the Isles', London 1942, p.95. (Hereafter Ingrams, 'Arabia').

(5) For details of the Kathiri tribal system in 1936 see Colonial 123, p.84.

long as they retained tribal support (1). The leader of a confederation of tribes needed to retain the support of the tribal leaders (2) whose tribes belonged to, or were coerced into, the confederation (3). Similarly, tribal leaders needed the support of the heads of their tribal sections, even as section leaders needed to retain the support of the families in their sections. These tribesmen included settled and nomadic groups; and, sometimes, sections of both groups were to be found in one tribe. But no contemporary papers are available to show what proportion of the population was settled. Much of the area was still unknown to British officers, and the Foreign and India Offices discouraged British, and still more foreign, visitors (4). Outside the main towns, non-tribal Muslims were dominated by their tribal neighbours. With the exception of Sultans' followers, non-tribesmen did not usually carry arms. The Jews of Habban were probably the only Jewish exception. But all men carried

(1) Bury 'Uz', p.344.

(2) Colonial 123, p.41

(3) Diagram A shows the structure of a Confederation.

(4) 10L. L/P&S/10 File 1202/1912. Sir Edward Grey -

HBMA, Copenhagen, 11.7.11

a general purpose knife which could be used for fighting.

In this thesis, 'tribe' is used where the Arabic word 'qabilah' (قبيلة) would be used locally. Confederation would often be more accurate, in anthropological terms, since, in many such 'tribes', the members of the confederation did not share a common ancestor (1). Instead, one tribe had elected a leader from their own members, or from some alien stock, and that leader then secured, or imposed, some degree of suzerainty over the neighbouring, and previously independent, tribes. The Fadhli 'tribe' illustrates this process. It was named after Fadhl bin Uthman, whose father was selected by the Merqashi tribesmen, because of his intelligence and character, to be their chief (2). By local tradition Uthman was born about 1600 A.D., the son of an Arab woman who was, reputedly, with child by a Sultan of Turkey. His mother was brought to Shuqra from Constantinople by a Seiyid. The child Uthman was brought up at AlSarriyah, amongst the Merqashi tribe(3).

(1) Cf. Bury, 'Uz', p.344.

(2) Assistant Adviser's Handing-Over Notes for the Central Area, W.A.P. 1957. Writer's copy.

(3) This is written as spelt and not as pronounced AsSarriyah.

Similarly, the Abdali, Aulaqi, Amiri, Haushabi, and possibly the Alawi 'tribes' had chiefs of alien stock. In the Hadhramaut, the Quaiti chief was of immigrant, Yafai, stock.

There were South Arabian confederations, and tribes, who traced their origins back to a common ancestor, but even such tribes adopted sections from other tribal stock as fellow tribesmen.

Diagram A provides examples of alien Murri tribesmen adopted into the Manahil tribe (1). There is therefore some similarity to the old Scotch clan system, where 'broken men', either as individuals, or as a group, from another tribe were accepted into another tribal structure (2). There, too, another clan, too small to protect itself, might enter into an agreement with a neighbouring clan for protection and mutual assistance (3). Thus, in Diagram A, the small Somiah clan was bound with the neighbouring Manahil (4). As in Scotland, clans and septs could separate into a larger number of distinct septs founded by clansmen who had become powerful, or in some

(1) Note 6 Diagram A

(2) G.R. Bain 'The Clans & Tartans of Scotland', Glasgow, 1938. (Hereafter Bain, 'Clans') p.37.

(3) Bain, 'Clans', p.40.

(4) Note 8 Diagram A.

way prominent (1). The Bait Hashaush, Bait Atoni and Bait Rawan septs of the Bait alMaashani subtribe of the Manahil illustrate how new septs could arise. Following a disagreement within the Bait Hashaush, after the killing of a neighbouring AlKathir tribesman, the sept broke into three. The old Bait Hashaush and the new Bait Rawan septs arranged a peace agreement with AlKathir, from which the new Bait Atoni sept was excluded. This internal division within the Bait Hashaush, and the killing which gave rise to it, weakened the position of the Bait Hashaush, who had held the chiefship within the Bait AlMaashani. The chiefship then passed into the Bait Salmin sept (2). The best interest of the whole tribal community was the decisive factor in selecting tribal leaders. Where a confederation was based on force, and not on a blood relationship, there was a tendency for such a 'tribe' to expand under a dominant leader and to contract under a weak one. Natural 'tribes', by contrast, had amore stable territorial basis and a greater common identity of interest.

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(1) Bain, 'Clans', p.37.

(2) Note 4, Diagram A.

The influential social class of the Seiyids existed outside the tribal structure (1). They claimed direct descent from the Prophet through his son-in-law, Ali. They kept outside tribal quarrels and did not generally carry arms. They were respected for their ancestry, and for their religious knowledge which was the only formal schooling of the area. They were often the mediators in personal, and in inter-tribal, quarrels (2). But the execution of their awards depended upon the litigants' acceptance of the Seiyids' decisions. In the Hadhramaut, all Seiyids claimed descent from Seiyid Ahmed bin Isa AlMuhajir (3). They had their own system for regulating affairs between themselves (4). Their social system had similarities with the local tribal

(1) Colonial 123, p.36-40 deals with the position of the Seiyids in Hadhramaut.

(2) Cf. Colonial 123, p.86 on their meditation in a dispute at the Hadhrami village of Ghurfa.

(3) Freya Stark 'The Southern Gates of Arabia', p.185, London 1940.

(4) The Al Ba Alawi Agreement, Arabic copy, made in 1965 in Tarim by Seiyid Alawi AbdArRahman bin Shahab from family papers.

system, and many families kept careful genealogies showing their connections with very distant branches living abroad. That made it more difficult for a stranger to declare himself, unjustifiably, to be a Seiyid, and so to benefit by their privileges. Most of these Seiyid families were settled, but there were semi-nomadic families living amongst some Bedouin tribes (1).

All Seiyids preserved their exclusiveness, outside the tribal system, because their womenfolk might not marry a non-Seiyid. Seiyids, however, could marry women of all communities. By judicious marriages with the daughters of prominent tribesmen individual Seiyids were able to gain increased tribal support. Indeed, amongst the Zaidi tribes, in the Yemen, their Imam had to be a Seiyid (2). He was a political, as well as a religious leader. Only if the Imam lacked the necessary qualities could an additional, political and military, leader, who was not a Seiyid, be recognised by the tribesmen (2).

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(1) Colonial 123, Note 1, p.40.

(2) IOL AF File No. 528 of 1928.

A note on the Zaidi Imamate of Sanaa by Captain M. Fazluddin, I.M.S., Political Officer, Hodaida, 1918-1924. (Hereafter Fazluddin, 'Notes').

Another small, but locally influential group was that of the various families of Mushaikh (1). In theory they neither raided, nor were raided by, tribesmen. In practice, both Seiyids and Mushaikh could have their property looted (2). But a personal request to the offender's chief might secure restoration. The term 'Mushaikh' meant 'people with knowledge' (1). There were both settled and nomadic Mushaikh, including some small Bedouin septs. Like the Seiyids, the Shaikhs filled the roles of inter-tribal peace-makers. They probably replaced, or continued from, the priesthood of the pre-Islamic religion as the principal arbitrators and, in settled areas, scholars, until partly displaced in their turn by the incoming Seiyids in the ninth century. They even acquired political power. One of the AlBureik Mushaikh of the Shabwa area established a dynasty which ruled over Shihr and the adjacent coast of Hadhramaut (3).

(1) Handing Over Notes, Northern Desert Areas, Aden Protectorate 1958. Writer's Copy.

(2) 10L LA Res. No. 800 of 23.12.65 to SGB reported a Seiyid pleading with the Fadhli chief for the return of a looted donkey.

(3) 4.11 n.2

The exact status of the Mushaikh in the South Arabian social system at this time remains obscure.

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Slaves in the Yemen and in Hadhramaut were generally in the possession of the more powerful rulers of settled areas (1). They were employed as servants and as armed retainers (2). They were not influential amongst the settled tribesmen and were rare amongst the Bedouin (3). The latter had no inducement to keep slaves. On the whole, slaves were treated well in Arabia (4). But, even when they were freed, they were still regarded as belonging to a separate, and lower, caste from the rest of the population (5). In the areas under British

(1) Colonial 123, p.43 for Hadhramaut in 1936. Conditions had probably changed little in the previous 70 years.

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.297

(3) W.G. Palgrave 'Central and Eastern Arabia', p.271/272, London, 1871 (Hereafter Palgrave 'Arabia')

(4) Bury 'Uz', p.301.

C.M. Doughty Vol. 1 'Travels in Arabia Deserta', Cambridge, 1888, reprinted London, Jan. 1949 p.604 (Hereafter Doughty 'Deserta')

Lt. Col. Sir A.T. Wilson 'The Persian Gulf' Oxford, 1928. p.214/5, referring particularly to E. Arabia.

(5) Bury 'Uz', p.278

influence there was probably most intermarriage between slaves and Arabs, in Lahej (1). On the west coast of the Yemen it was common (2).

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Stability in the Yemen, or in Hadhramaut, depended largely upon the quality of leadership and on the relations between leaders at the head of the tribal groupings (3). The tribal leader was the ultimate judge in disputes between individuals, sections, or tribes, in tribal areas (4). Until the partial Ottoman re-occupation, beginning in 1872, there was not even a nominal single administrative authority for the Yemen.

(1) Bury 'Uz' p.348.

(2) G.W. Bury 'Arabia' p.29.

(3) Colonial 123 p.80 and p.84.

(4) Ibid. p.132-133 for an assessment of the role of the chief amongst the Kathiris; and Tape-recording by AlBukheit bin Salim bin Laksar of the Bait Atoni Manahil on the role of the Mugaddam amongst the Manahil. Recorded in Aden, 1966, by the writer.

Even after 1872, Ottoman authority was limited and rarely secure (1). Hadhramaut never had a regional administration during this period. By 1936 '... there were getting on for 2000 separate Governments in the Hadhramaut ...' (2). The notion of one central 'Government' was therefore only known to Yemenis or Hadhramis who had had experience of Ottoman rule in the Tihama ports; or, of British rule in Aden; or, to those who had travelled outside the area. Local loyalties, only, not national ones, were strong.

Natural disasters, such as disease, drought, and locust plagues also affected stability. So did political changes in adjacent areas, which gave rise to boundary disputes, and to opportunities for rivalry and intrigues over territory by each new and expansionist Power.

The resident population of the Yemen had little experience of other races and religions. The resident Hadhramis had less. Most of the Bedouin tribes had none. Slaves were the most obvious 'foreigners'; but those imported from Africa adopted Islam (3); and slave children

(1) 10th Edition, Encyclopaedia Britannica 1902, p.518
Article on Arabia by Sir T.H. Holdich, K.C.I.E.
(Hereafter Britannica 'Arabia').

(2) Ingrams Arabia p.348.

(3) Doughty 'Deserta' I p.605.

born in Arabia were brought up as Moslems. The other main, foreign, element was the Ottoman presence in the coastal ports of the Tihama. There were also some Somalis and a few Indians in coastal ports. Aden's large polyglot foreign community was exceptional.

The Yemen had a considerable, long established, Jewish community, but they lived on suffrance (1). They had no direct political influence, and they could not afford to show signs of affluence. They were not allowed to build houses higher than two storeys. But in some areas the Jews were, by local standards, wealthy (2). Their relative wealth, in some areas, and their skill as craftsmen, gave them an indirect local influence with their tribal neighbours. They were allowed to travel throughout the Yemen, despised but tolerated by the feuding tribesmen who needed their skills. They obtained local protection by virtue of the taxes they paid to

(1) Rev. A. Sinker. Memorials of the Hon. I. Keith-Falconer, Cambridge, 1888. pp.162-163. (Hereafter Sinker 'Keith-Falconer').

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.18. Dhala was one such area.
Bury 'Arabia' p.30.

their tribal neighbours. But, like all travellers in the Yemen, their journeys were not always safe from robbery. There were no Jews in Hadhramaut.

The Yemenis and Hadhramis considered all 'Europeans' as a single group, like 'the Arabs'. Europeans were synonymous with 'Christians'. Even individual Britons from Aden were, long after, referred to as 'the Christian' or 'the European' by the Yemenis from outside Aden (1). While in local correspondence with the Aden Residency, the British were, understandably, referred to as 'the English'. Indeed Europeans were personally unknown to most South Arabians who had not travelled abroad, for there was little contact with them outside the coastal ports. Few Europeans travelled in the interior; and those who did moved on the roads without the security that Muslims were entitled to expect, but did not always receive, once beyond the areas under Ottoman administration

(1) Lord Belhaven. 'The Uneven Road'. Murray, London 1955, p.126 referring to the 1930's (Hereafter Belhaven 'Road').

or under effective British influence (1). Indeed the difficulties of travel perpetuated tribal separateness and suspicion. In the Yemen, the main mountainous range ran from north to south and made travel difficult down the length of the country (2). So trade flowed naturally from the highlands to the west coast ports, or from south-east Yemen to Aden, when political conditions provided sufficient security on the roads (2). By 1902 the greater part of the Yemen's external trade went to Aden by land or by coastal shipping (3).

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- (1) Thesiger 'Sands' p.239 and p.248 describing recent tribal religious prejudices against Christian and European travellers in S.E. Arabia.

F. Stark 'Seen in the Hadhramaut' London 1938, pages XIII-XV referring to the absence of Christians' right to free movement in the local view. (Hereafter Stark 'Hadhramaut').

- (2) Bury 'Arabia' p.115.

- (3) Britannica 'Arabia' p.518.

Physical characteristics of S.W. Arabia.

The Asir-Yemen highland area was particularly productive because its fertile soil was watered by the autumnal monsoon and by moisture from the constant up-current of air from the Red Sea (1). The Yemen highlands rose steeply from the Tihama to heights varying from 6,000 ft to almost 11,000 ft (2). To the eastwards, the land sloped gradually to the desert. Over the Yemen, rainfall decreased towards the south and east and little regular rain fell on the south Yemen coast (3), on the desert to the east, or on Hadhramaut. So the areas which British influence began to expand into from 1865 supported relatively small populations. The southern coastal plain was narrow, and largely unproductive. It was broken, east of Shuqra, at Muqatatain where the coastal hills reached the shore. It reappeared briefly at the

(1) Col. R. Meinertzhagen 'Birds of Arabia', Edinburgh 1954 p.5.

(2) نهرية The Coastal plain along the south-western and southern shores of the Arabian Peninsula. Hans Wehr 'A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic' p.98. Wiesbaden, Germany, 1961. (Hereafter 'Wehr's dictionary'). In this thesis 'Tihama' is used for the S.W. coast only.

(3) Bury 'Uz' p.307.

mouth of the Wadi Ahwar. The next areas of agricultural coastal land were in Wadi Meifaa and in Wadi Hajr. Beyond, the coastal plain began again east of Burum. It vanished at Mukalla, where the hills again reached the coast. Another area of plain stretched from the east of Mukalla to Ras Baghashwah. But, by European standards, prospects for coastal Hadhramaut might (...) from an agricultural point of view, be considered non-existent (1). The coastal plain stretched on again beyond Mukalla, with intermittent breaks, to Ras Sharwain at the western extremity of the bay on which the Mahri centre of Qishn stood.

(1) Colonial 123 p.63 quoting an English agricultural expert about 1920.

The Aden Residency and the Yemen tribes

1865 - 1872

British relations with the Yemeni tribes near Aden depended upon the personality of each Resident rather than upon official Indian Government policy. The Foreign Department of the Government of India (1) wished to avoid intervention in tribal affairs. Intervention cost money and led to military commitments which were not justified by any local commercial opportunities. Aden was wanted only as the most convenient coaling station, in the absence of a suitable island, on the route to Suez. Career bureaucrats in the Foreign Department could take this detached view (2). Residents, and still more their staffs with longer service in Aden, could not. They were in touch with people from all over the Gulf of Aden, and therefore human emotions influenced the way in which Residents interpreted their official instructions

(1) Hereafter 'Foreign Department' as opposed to the British 'Foreign Office'.

(2) Cf. Lord Roberts 'Forty-One Years in India' cheap edn. London 1905 p.246. (Hereafter Roberts 'India').

on Indian Government policy in the area.

The Residents were soldiers, trained to act on their own initiative in a local emergency, to be jealous of national honour, and to consider the strategic requirements of their commands. In the absence of cable connections between India and Aden, until 1870, the Resident at Aden could exercise considerable discretion in his use of local British resources. So long as his initiative was successful, and involved no apparent new commitments, it was unlikely to be disowned. It was difficult to challenge such action, in a little-known area. Aden's administration was based on the Foreign Department and the Government of Bombay trusting the Resident to observe the spirit of his orders. After 1870, with the opening of the cable from Bombay to Aden, the Residents lost their justification for individual initiations in an emergency (1). The power to take action was then centralized in the Foreign Department. The Viceroy's Government, too, came more closely under the control of the Secretary of State for India and the Home Government through the cable connection between Aden and Egypt and so to Europe.

(1) F078 2753 Sir B. Frere to Sir Henry Elliot 2.1.73

In 1865 a new era was dawning in the Gulf of Aden, because of growing European interest even before the opening of the Suez Canal. Local British hegemony was to be challenged by maritime Powers other than the French. Previously, French warships had provided virtually the only other foreign naval presence in the area, and France had no effective local base nearer than the island of Réunion. The Foreign Department was, however, slow to heed successive Residents, from 1865, when they urged a revision of the traditional policy of non-intervention in the Yemen. Britain could not otherwise maintain her local influence. But it was not until 1873 that the Foreign Department's resistance suddenly collapsed, under pressures which Aden Residents had begun to forecast in 1869 (1). The opening of the Suez Canal stimulated existing interest and brought in new foreign interests.

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How Merewether established local Abdali dominance, 1865-67.

Famine was widespread in the Yemen from 1864 to

(1) AAR 1868/69, para. 68.

1866 (1); the drought was accompanied by cattle disease and by a cholera epidemic (2); and there were locust swarms on the coast (3). The rhythm of local life was unbalanced. Starving immigrants came into Aden, confirming the acute suffering in the interior. Merewether noted that cholera deaths in Aden occurred only amongst these immigrants; the better-fed townspeople recovered (4). Tribesmen in the interior reverted to raiding neighbouring areas and caravan routes. In January 1865, Resident Major W. Merewether reported raids by Abdali Azaibi tribesmen on passing caravans (5). Fadhli tribesmen also raided their neighbours. The natural disasters had forced the coastal tribesmen to revert to their traditional raiding habits. Security deteriorated on the plain near Aden.

The Fadhli tribesmen were pastoralists, with subsistence grain crops from flood irrigation in normal

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.178.

(2) Hunter 'Aden' p.176-177

(3) LA Res-S of S 28.1.65

(4) LA Res-S of S 17.6.65

(5) LA res-S of S 3.1.65

years but few wells. When their livestock died and their grain stocks were exhausted they had little to exchange for imported grain in Aden. The Abdalis were, in general, more fortunate; sub-surface water could be tapped in the most populated, northern, Abdali area. Some Abdalis had money and bought grain in Aden (1). But the Azaibi Abdalis, between Lahej and Aden, were mainly pastoralists; they suffered like the Fadhlis. Merewether claimed that even the Abdalis lost 500 dead from cholera and famine, and that many Abdalis had to leave the Lahej area to seek food elsewhere (2).

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Merewether's Annual Report for 1863/64 was summarized in Bombay as '... on the whole satisfactory ...;' (3) but, before the end of 1864, Merewether was complaining of a recrudescence of tribal raiding (4). The first Fadhli

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 17.6.65

(2) LA, Res - S of S, 18.12.65

(3) LB, 1863-66, SGB - S of S, 12.11.64

(4) LA, Res - S of S, 3.1.65

raid described was by hill tribesmen (1), not directly under the Fadhli Chief, on a caravan from Shaikh Othman. Merewether maintained that Ahmad bin Abdullah could have controlled the raiders if he wished to. That was possibly true under normal conditions. Merewether may not have appreciated, initially, the extent, and the effect, of the calamities affecting the interior. He required the Fadhli Chief to make restitution for the 40 looted camels and their loads (2). The raid was not a British concern; so Merewether's demand was an unauthorised intervention in internal Yemeni affairs; and Merewether himself noted that the raiders were not directly under Ahmed bin Abdullah.

There are no contemporary figures for camel prices; 12 years later F.M. Hunter valued baggage camels at MT \$25 to 40 each (3). Merewether was possibly demanding a payment exceeding the annual Fadhli stipend. The much larger Abdali stipend was divided between members of the

(1) Possibly Merqashis who would have been amongst the first to feel the scarcity.

(2) LA, Res - S of S, 3.1.65

(3) Hunter 'Aden' p.71.

chiefly family (1); and the Abdali Chief claimed that he lacked the money needed for caravan escorts, even though tribal leaders were held to be responsible for the safety of caravan routes within their own areas, in return for their stipends. It is possible that the Fadhli Chief lacked the means to meet Merewether's demands; it is probable that he felt no obligation to do so. Merewether described his reply as unsatisfactory. The chief then participated in a foraging raid into Abdali territory in January, 1865; Merewether considered that to be 'hostile' and 'most insulting' to the British (2). Within the context of local tribal life Merewether's descriptions were unjustified (3). Merewether was probably trying to pick a quarrel. He subsequently asked Bombay for permission to take punitive action, (4) but that was refused.

Anticipating approval, Merewether had encouraged

- (1) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65, quoting Coghlan early in 1863.
- (2) LA, Res - S of S, 17.1.65
- (3) Cf. Colonial 123 p.45
- (4) LA, Res - S of S and SGB, 3.1.65

the Abdali Chief to plan a joint attack against the Fadhliis with the Lower Aulaqi Chief. Merewether assisted the Abdali preparations with a payment of MT\$5000; and he proposed to assist Abdali Aulaqi liaison by carrying the Abdali negotiators in the Government steamer to Ahwar, the Aulaqi centre. Bombay's rejection of his proposals meant that Merewether had to recover the MT\$5000, or to repay it himself. He never notified its recovery; it is probable that the payment remained outstanding as an advance against the Abdali Chief, recoverable from his annual stipend of \$MT6492, until 1866. Merewether regretted the rejection of his proposals in a long letter to the Secretary of State. He reported Fadhli raiding, the local food shortage and insecurity within the Abdali area. He made a proposal for restoring security and so reviving Abdali agriculture, and thereby reducing the cost of rationing the British garrison, by raising a troop of horse (1). Merewether announced that he had stopped payment of the Fadhli subsidy, alleging that it would have been '... most unbecoming ... to have continued ...' it (1). He blamed the insecurity on

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65

the Fadhli Chief.

Merewether reviewed his own close relations with the Abdali Chief and his participation in the settlement of the Abdali succession dispute (1). He praised the whole-hearted co-operation of the Abdali Chief, who was '...heart and soul with us, and only anxious to be told what to do to execute it at once...' . He deplored the insecurity leading to the carrying of arms everywhere for personal security. It is possible that quarrels within the Abdali chiefly family following the disputed succession contributed to local insecurity (1). Merewether compared the Yemenis with the Baluchi tribesmen he knew from his time in Sind (1). He argued that crushing the Fadhli capacity for raiding could be as beneficial for local Abdali agricultural development as his own defeat of the Buqtis had been for Sind (2). Aden would benefit as Karachi had done; but Merewether received no encouragement from London or Bombay.

In June, 1865, Merewether recorded the growing scarcity of food in the interior and the dangerous drop in Aden's imported grain stocks (3). The summer was a

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65.

(2) Cf. T.A. Heathcote, London University Thesis, 1969/70, "British Policy and Baluchistan 1854 - 1876" on Merewether's actions and experience there.

(3) LA, Res - S of S, 17.6.65.

dangerous season for shipping travelling between Bombay and Aden; Merewether had understandable cause for anxiety with only 2 months supplies in Aden. The Fadhliis had looted a Sindi vessel, freighted with grain, and a Somali vessel, which both came into Shuqra Bay for water. Merewether condemned the Fadhli chief; '...the plunder received his countenance and sanction if [it was] not done by his orders...'. When the Fadhliis were starving, it is questionable whether their chief could have prevented the looting. Merewether's condemnation may have been influenced by his own concern at Aden's loss of the grain cargo. Yet, though an Indian ship had been robbed in the port where the Fadhli Chief lived, Merewether asked for no purely naval action to demand compensation. Instead he asked for, but was refused, naval support for a sea-borne landing to destroy the inland Fadhli commercial centre of Assala (1). That implied a wish to destroy a Fadhli market rival to Lahej.

In September, Merewether reported the attack by Fadhli tribesmen on a caravan, within British limits, but outside Aden's defences (2). Merewether described

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 17.6.65.

(2) LA, Res - S of S, 18.9.65.

the site as 'on acknowledged British ground', one and a half miles from the Barrier Gate. '... Two hundred Foodlees suddenly appeared on the road ...' (1); possibly the Fadhlis pursued the caravan onto British claimed territory. But, there were no buildings between the defences and Imad; there were no boundary marks; and both the Abdalis and the Fadhlis disputed possession of the coast between Imad and Aden. Technically, Merewether was probably correct. Haines' sketch map of 1839 indicated the British limits in the area that Merewether mentioned (2). But raiding within sight of Aden was not unusual (3). It is unlikely that the Fadhli action was intended to insult the British, as Merewether claimed. But, by tribal custom, no tribe, still less a European Power, could let an incident on their territory pass unchallenged without loss of face, even if they were not involved in the incident (4).

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 18.9.65

(2) Map B.

(3) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65

(4) J.N. Ellis, OBE, last R.A., E.A.P., in a letter of 5.7.1971, to the writer commenting on this incident.

Merewether could take no retaliatory action with Aden's resources; and he was not even the garrison commander. Campaigning inland was impractical, locally, from May to mid October. Dust storms were not uncommon. The Aden garrison had neither cavalry nor camelry; and the infantry and artillery had no chance of pursuing mounted raiders. They also lacked baggage animals. The season was even unfavourable for naval operations; and, since the disbandment of the Indian Navy in 1863, the Residency had suffered from lack of naval support.

On 13th December, Muhammad bin Mohsin, the Abdali chief's favourite brother, escorted a highland caravan into Aden; he visited Merewether and '... begged that some assistance might be rendered ...' to the Abdalis (1). He had been sent as Sultan Fadhl's representative to forecast that the Fadhlis, under their Chief, were about to occupy the southerly Bir Said area (2), '... a part of the country which had been fortunate in the extent of its cultivation ...' (1), and to harvest its crops. The Fadhlis, Muhammad alleged, also planned to close the

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 18.12.1865 and to SGB

(2) Described as 15 miles S.S.E. of Lahej (para. 4, note 1); it is not marked on Aden maps.

roads to Aden, knowing '... that the British could do nothing about it ...'. It is possible that this statement was inserted by Merewether to justify action against the Fadhlis. Merewether wrote '... It was clear to me that something must be immediately done to save those crops and to show the Fadhli Chief that he would not be allowed to close the roads or brave us with impunity ...' (1). Muhammad claimed that the Abdalis had only enough men to defend Lahej.

Merewether applied to the Garrison Commander to hold a force in readiness for operations against the Fadhlis; and he wrote to Bombay, asking for permission to take action and for authority to subsidise the Abdali Chief with £MT5000 (1). It is possibly no coincidence that this was the original sum earlier advanced to Fadhl bin Mohsin by Merewether without authority. Merewether accepted the possibly distorted account of the Fadhli Chief's ill-will towards, and his contempt of, the British. In 1856, Fadhl's brother had vainly attempted to blacken the Fadhli Chief's character with the British (2). But General W. Coghlan, the Resident

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 18.12.1865 and to SGB

(2) Playfair 'Arabia Felix' ^{Bombay, 1859} p.171. Hereafter Playfair
'Arabia'

had then had the benefit of the Rev. G.P. Badger's experience, and of Hormuzd Rassam's. Merewether had no such experienced expatriate advisers to assess the reliability of the Abdali reports. It is possible that Merewether inserted the Fadhli's alleged views because they provided the only possible justification for British action. Bombay refused to authorise action, but Merewether had not awaited approval.

Bir Said was isolated from the principal Abdali settlements in an area of thick acacia jungle with open clearings. The Fadhli's encamped in a clearing; they were reported to be 1,000 strong; and they were so confident that they had no scouts posted when the British attacked, late in the morning of 22nd December (1). Two of the local fields had been harvested by the Fadhli's; some of the raiders were picking off the stalk, and packing, the looted grain. Others were cooking the mid-day meal. Conditions for a British surprise attack were ideal. The Fadhli's apparently had no reason to fear Abdali, or British, opposition. The Fadhli's were 'panic stricken'; '...the Fadhli chief shouted for a horse and being put on it fled at once ...' (1). Later,

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 23.12.65

Merewether, in defence of his action, claimed that '... from the roads being closed, the greatest distress would have been experienced by the Garrison and inhabitants of Aden - not a drop of water, not a blade of grass, nor a bit of wood would have come in so long as the Foodlee remained at Bheer Saied and its neighbourhood ...' (1).

Merewether's claim is exaggerated; he could have repaired the Khormaksar bridge and placed picquets between Khormaksar and Shaikh Othman. Water and supplies would have come in then in perfect security; water would also have continued to be available by boat from Hiswa across the Bay. There is no evidence that the Fadhlis intended to move beyond Bir Said. Merewether mentioned no raiding parties. If there had been any, he surely would have used their presence to support his action. It is possible that Merewether was merely making the best justification he could for his rather weak case. That is supported by the Fadhli Chief's offer of peace, if he was compensated for the damage inflicted upon him by the British (2). By tribal custom that

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 16.1.66

(2) LA, Res - S of S, 2.4.1866

would be an injured party's entitlement for a treacherous attack in peacetime. Merewether ridiculed the offer (1). He did not suggest that his attack was considered to be in breach of a Fadhli understanding of British neutrality in tribal affairs (2).

Merewether's action at Bir Said was approved retrospectively by the Government of Bombay (3). Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor of Bombay, believed that there were occasions when an officer was justified in acting on his own initiative, in a local emergency, without orders (4). There had to be mutual confidence between superior and subordinate authorities. Once operations had begun, they had to be completed; so Merewether marched through the Fadhli area of Abyan

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 2.4.66.

(2) i.e. C.U.Aitchison 'A collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads', Calcutta 1909, Vol XIII (Hereafter Aitchison 'Treaties'), No. XXXIII.

Fadhli chief to Resident saying that the British were not to interfere in any Fadhli Abdali hostilities, but would remain friendly to both sides.

(3) LB, Dispatch No. 7 of 28.2.66 - S of S.

(4) Philip Woodruff 'The Guardians', London, 1954, p.40, quoting Frere to Lawrence (hereafter Woodruff 'Guardians').

early in January, with Fadhl bin Mohsin and Abdali supporters. Merewether claimed that his intention was to demonstrate the British capacity to operate outside Aden, along the coastal plain (1). He exerted pressure upon the Fadhli; some of Ahmad bin Abdullah's followers submitted; and some of the Fadhli settlements in Abyan were destroyed, including the principal centre, Assala (2). The Fadhli did not attempt to oppose Merewether. The Anglo-Indian troops' superiority in weapons was decisive. The Abdali auxiliaries provided the camelry for scouting which the British lacked. Merewether ascribed the success of his operations in 1866/67 '... in great degree ... to the faithful conduct of the Abdali chief ... and tribe ...' (3).

It is probable that Merewether's ultimate aim was to destroy the basis of the Fadhli strength in Abyan, so that the Fadhli could not again threaten Lahej. The destruction of Assala destroyed a rival market

- (1) IOL. Enclosures to Bombay Correspondence to S of S of 28.2.66. Merewether's Report on the Abyan operations.
- (2) Hunter 'Aden' p.168
- (3) AAR 1866/67, para 42

centre of Lahej; and thereby the Fadhli chief lost a major source of revenue. Assala was in a healthy position, on the edge of the malarious Abyan delta; and it had secure communications to the Fadhli chief at Shuqra. By destroying it, Fadhl bin Mohsin probably realised, Abyan would deteriorate into an insecure border area. The Fadhli client, 'Haidera Mansour', tribe to the north were able to recover virtual independence (1). The Yafais were encouraged to reoccupy their old position at Jawala (1). It is possible that the Abdali chief hoped to replace Fadhli control in Abyan by his own, by intriguing with the Yafais and with the Haidera Mansour (2). If so, other preoccupations intervened.

Merewether was determined to humble the Fadhli Chief, to make him surrender unconditionally; he therefore urged continuing British pressure after the successful Abyan operations (3). Simultaneously,

(1) See Map E.

(2) Cf. Belhaven 'Road' p.151 on Abdali ambitions 70 years later.

(3) LA, Res - S of S, 2.4.66

Merewether used continuing Fadhli resistance as a continuing argument for the early recruitment of Irregular Cavalry, which he had requested since January, 1865 (1). Events in Abyssinia kept Merewether away from Aden from May to December 1866 (2); and shortly afterwards, in 1867, he left for Zoula, the Eritrean base for the Abyssinian campaign. The Fadhli chief sent his eldest son to surrender in Aden in April, 1867 (3).

Merewether's peace terms restricted the Fadhli's freedom of action; they might not raid tribes friendly to the British; but Merewether did not otherwise interfere with their tribal society (4). The caravan routes had to be protected, but that was expected before; robbers were to be punished, but that was necessary for travellers' security. The most important condition, as events developed, was the requirement that a prominent hostage had to stay as a tribal intermediary in Aden. The Chief's eldest son, Haidera, came; he learnt to

(1) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65

(2) AAR 1866/67, para. 40

(3) LB, GB^O Despatch No. 58 of 24.7.67 - S of S

(4) Aitchison 'Treaties' No. XXXIV of 27.5.67

understand the British; he made friends with the Residency Interpreter and arranged for him to be the Fadhli Agent in Aden. As a result, Haidera bin Ahmad showed no pro-Ottoman feelings in 1873, during the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation, although his father had received encouragement from the Ottoman, Ahmad Pasha of Hodaida (1).

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Captain W.F. Prideaux wrote, at second-hand, a contemporary account of Merewether's relations with the Fadhli between 1864 and 1867; he accepted that '... it is ... alleged, as a reason for the Fadhli Chief's misbehaviour, that our relations with the Sultan of Lahej have become so intimate as to virtually exclude ... all other Chiefs from a share of our friendship and the benefits that accrued therefrom ...' (2). But he blamed hostilities upon '... the character of the Arabs in general ...', and upon the courage and stubborn fanaticism of Ahmad bin Abdullah in particular (2). Prideaux

(1) LB, G.B^O Dispatch No. 1 of 12.1.67

(2) AIA, AD III A

unsympathetically claimed that Ahmad had '... an utter disregard of consequences, whether personal to himself, or effecting [sic] the very existence of his tribe ...' and that Ahmad's attitude arose from his resentment at the British possession of Aden. Prideaux's account was the usual source used by later officials and writers (1). No Fadhli account was available.

Prideaux's account needs to be read with some scepticism; he was in Abyssinia with Rassam's mission while the events were taking place. He had little understanding of local conditions; he blamed Ahmad bin Abdullah for '... being every ready to afford a safe refuge to the perpetrators of [anti-British] atrocities ...', but the Fadhli Chief was obliged by Arab custom to provide asylum for fugitives (2). H.F. Jacob recognised that it would have been '... a moral impossibility ...' for the Fadhli Chief to surrender, or to expel, such fugitives (3).

(1) e.g. Hunter 'Aden' p.201

(2) Cf. Colonial 123 p.42

(3) H.F. Jacob 'Kings of Arabia', London, 1923, p.61.
(Hereafter Jacob 'Kings'). Jacob had then had about 20 years experience of S.W. Arabia.

Prideaux was writing about a successful action, vindicated officially by its results, and approved by the Foreign Department and by the Government of Bombay. Further, he was probably indebted to Merewether for his transfer from the Indian Army to political work (1). He was unlikely to criticise a successful senior officer, and, by implication, the Governments which had approved that officer's actions (2).

Playfair referred to the Fadhli tribe's conversion '... from implacable enemies into staunch supporters and friends ...' before 1858, as a result of General Coghlan's conciliatory policy towards the Fadhli Chief (3). Playfair was accepted as being very experienced in local affairs (4); yet Prideaux acknowledged only a temporary Fadhli change of heart, due to Coghlan's operations against the Abdalis at Shaikh Othman in 1858, and his conciliatory policy towards the Fadhli. Prideaux's comments were consistent with Merewether's account of Ahmad bin Adballuh's

(1) IOL, PD, D0 Correspondence, 1862-73, Sir John Kaye to Brigadier W. Coghlan in, undated , 1863.

(2) Cf. Tremenheere, p.2.47 line 6 below - line 10.

(3) Playfair 'Arabia' p.36

(4) IOL L/P & S/8/10 Vol. 50. Sir J.W. Kaye - Brig. W. Coghlan 5.12.62.

behaviour. But there is insufficient evidence to justify this view.

Prideaux suggested that the Fadhli Chief was resentful because he received a smaller salvage reward for a stranded ship in 1864 than he had expected. By local custom he would probably have been entitled to half the ship's value. But Ahmad bin Abdalluh's behaviour was amply explained by the predicaments which he found himself in. Prideaux's views were probably different to Playfair's. Playfair supported Coghlan's policy of direct Residency relations with each tribe. Merewether advocated building-up the Abdali Chief and then dealing with the other Yemeni tribes through him. Prideaux admitted that, but for British intervention, the Fadhli Chief would probably have absorbed the Abdali area into the Fadhli Confederation.

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Merewether did not declare his intention to build up the Abdali chief in his correspondence; that can be deduced from his later management of affairs and from his comments after he left Aden. Merewether's policy was realistic in the short term; and, if there had been

continuity amongst the Aden Residency staff, it might have been an economical way of spreading British influence through an Anglophile Abdali Chief. It required no heavy expenditure of Government money outside Aden; it possibly required no additional staff; and there was no extra military requirement beyond the proposed 100-strong Aden Troop of Irregular Cavalry (1). Merewether argued that security in the coastal plain would produce a great increase in agriculture. Agricultural wealth would provide the resources to finance the Abdali Chief as the Paramount Chief. Merewether implied in 1870 that Fadhī bin Mohsin had the brains and the courage, but was too lazy, to profit by his opportunities (2).

The truth is probably that a plan such as this was impractical; that Merewether was too quick to assume 'after ... fifteen years experience on the Frontier of Sind , ... [that] the people of the Southern Yemen and their habits are so exactly similar that you have only to change the name from Belooch to Arab and all differences would cease ...' (3). On the Sind frontier,

(1) 10.19 n.3

(2) AIA 560 f 457. Merewether's Memo of 24.11.70 to SGB. Merewether was then Commissioner for Sind.

(3) LA, Res - S of S, 28.1.65

John Jacob had worked successfully to build up the authority of the Khan of Kelat amongst the Beluchi tribes (1). Frere, as Commissioner of Sind, had delegated considerable power to Jacob and had supported his work (2). The Beluchis acknowledged the Khan as the leader of their confederation; but the Abdali Chief had little tribal backing and his ancestors came from Jauf in northern Yemen. There was insufficient basis for a comparison with the Beluchis. Merewether did not understand, and possibly did not know much about, Yemeni tribal organisations.

Merewether was very friendly with Fadhl bin Mohsin; the latter was, in a sense, Merewether's protégé. Merewether had intervened to support Fadhl for the Abdali leadership in 1863. In June, 1865, Merewether was so concerned for Fadhl's health, when cholera was raging at Lahej, that he invited him to Aden to convalesce from illness (3). By contrast, the elderly Fadhli Chief never visited Aden. It is probable that Merewether's

(1) Deputy Commissioner of the Frontier Districts and Commandant of the Sind Horse.

(2) Woodruff 'Guardians' p.30

(3) LA, Res - S of S, 17.6.65

impressions of Yemen affairs and of local Yemeni leaders were largely influenced by Fadhl bin Mohsin. The latter had ambitions to regain the Aqrabi area (1); his brother Muhammad had ambitions to expand Abdali control over the Subaibi area (2); and Fadhl proposed in 1871 to occupy the Hajariya Province of Southern Yemen (3). He did expand at Haushabi expense in 1868 (4). The evidence of Fadhl's territorial ambition is clear; and Merewether may have believed that Fadhl was the right man to develop a single state in Southern Yemen, bound to Britain by self-interest. Merewether claimed that Sir James Outram had '... at once ...' foreseen that no Resident could remain '... indifferent to what was going on outside the Barrier Gate ...' (5). Merewether tried to shape, and probably altered, the course of Yemeni development near Aden; but his next two successors dissipated much of the local influence that Merewether gained.

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(1) p.2.34 below

(2) 7.42 n.1

(3) p.2.59

(4) p.2.27-

(5) LA, Res - S of S, 16.1.66

'The Zaida Question', an Abdali Haushabi quarrel over water rights and land.

The Haushabis had long controlled the headworks to the traditional Abdali flood irrigation system, but they seldom exercised their power of seriously annoying the Abdalis by diverting the water into the desert (1). However, increased Abdali security, after the Fadhli defeats in 1865 and in 1866, gave to the Abdalis opportunities for expanding their agriculture. But, the greater the area under cultivation, the more important it became to the Abdalis to secure control of their irrigation system. The Abdali chief and his relatives were major landholders; they had benefitted disproportionately by the British destruction of Fadhli power. They owed their new security to the British; they had little need to reward tribal supporters and to keep them loyal by customary grants of land and conciliatory treatment. Furthermore, the Abdali chief had received money grants from the Residency; he enjoyed rising revenue from the new transit tax on caravans, from water sales to Aden; and he imposed new monopolies on

(1) Playfair 'Arabia' p.36

the Abdali area (1). He no longer needed to spend money to protect his possessions from the Fadhli; and with his surplus cash he could buy up local land. Fadhl bin Mohsin left most of his administrative work to his younger brother, Muhammad, who developed new ways of raising local revenue (1). The chiefly family were criticised by Residency Officers for their avarice, and for their selfish exploitation of land, regardless of the wider interests of the local community (1). Changing social conditions made this exploitation easier. New agricultural land could be brought under cultivation cheaply by African freed slaves released destitute in Aden (2), and by immigrant Yemeni Zabidis, working as share-croppers. These circumstances combined to favour the rise of a relatively rich family oligarchy at Lahej, replacing the more traditional Yemeni tribal system.

In 1867, the Abdali Chief invited the Resident to send the 10th Bengal Cavalry to camp near Lahej, until they were required for the Abyssinian Campaign (3).

(1) AIA 560 f 443, Lt. G.F. Hancock's Report on Lahej of March 1871

(2) IOL, P.D. Memo B85 of 12.11.69 on E. African Coast Slave Trade, Res - SGB, 24.12.68

(3) AAR, 1867/68, para 18

Fadh1 bin Mohsin made himself responsible for providing the fodder that the Cavalry needed. Possibly this was profitable for him; the Cavalry had approximately 800 horses and mules (1). There were inroads on the summer stock of forage for local needs and a shortage occurred amongst the Abdalis (2). Possibly the Abdalis then trespassed on grazing within Haushabi limits. In May, 1868, the Haushabis diverted Abdali irrigation water into the desert, in retaliation for real or imagined grievances (3). Abdali Haushabi fighting began and there were casualties on both sides. The Abdalis occupied the strategic Haushabi hamlet of Zaida, which commanded the irrigation headworks to the Abdali cultivation, and the Haushabi Chief's home village of ArRaha. The Haushabis were worsted and accepted Abdali peace conditions.

The Haushabi Chief and his Elders surrendered the village of Zaida and its lands, in compensation for Abdali losses and expenses during the fighting (3). The area provided '... the chief part of the Haushabi

(1) Roberts 'India' Note p.296

(2) AAR 1867/68, para. 18

(3) AAR 1868/69, para. 37

revenue ...' (1), so the Haushabi chief quickly regretted his loss. The Resident, Major General E.L. Russell, tried to mediate. He considered the Abdali seizure of Zaida unjustified; he advised Fadhl bin Mohsin to return it to the Haushabi Chief; but he had no authority to impose a solution (2). He did, however, arrange a six-months truce; but he gave the Haushabi chief grounds for hoping to recover Zaida through British mediation.

Russell did not come to Aden until January 11th, 1868; he then went to command the British base at Zoula for the Abyssinian Expedition from March 11th until June 21st. In Aden, he lacked the benefit of Residency interpreter Hormuzd Rassam's experience of Yemeni affairs and his senior Assistant, Captain G.R. Goodfellow, was away on sick leave until October, 1868. Russell possibly overestimated the local impression of the successful Abyssinian Campaign and thought that British prestige was so high that his mediation would be accepted (3). His intervention was an error of judgement; he raised

(1) AIA 560 f 723, Capt. Prideaux's Report of 19.1.72

(2) AAR 1868/69, para. 37

(3) Cf. Roberts 'India' p.298 for Merewether's view

Ali bin Manaa's hopes falsely, and he showed Fadhl bin Mohsin the weakness of a Resident's position when the latter was not prepared, and not authorised, to apply pressure to back his judgement. Merewether had made Fadhl powerful locally. Russell showed Fadhl that he could disregard an indecisive Resident's wishes.

The Haushabi chief then tried to obtain support from his tribal neighbours for combined action against the Abdali chief (1). The old Fadhli chief refused to join in; and his successor, Haidera bin Ahmad, tried to prevent Merqashi tribesmen assisting the Haushabis in 1871 (2). Haidera took firm action against such Merqashi dissidents as disobeyed him. In January, 1871, the Resident reported 'slight skirmishing' on the Haushabi Yafai border (3). The Yafais were possibly encouraged to attack by the Abdali chief as there were Abdali Yafai marriage ties. Fadhl bin Mohsin complained of a caravan being attacked within Haushabi limits, too (4); it is possible that the Abdali complaint was designed to prevent

(1) AAR 68/69, para. 38

(2) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 11.5.71

(3) AIA 560 f 3, Res - SGB, 7.1.71

(4) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 27.1.71

any Anglo-Haushabi rapprochement. The new Resident, General C.W. Tremenheere, wrote and warned Ali bin Manaa that he would '... incur the displeasure of Government by permitting such outrages ...' (1), without obtaining the Haushabi version of the incident. The Haushabi reply was unconciliatory; but, by February, Tremenheere was complaining of Fadhl's arrogance and ambition (2). It is possible that Tremenheere might have become more impartial. By April, however, Tremenheere had become dependent upon Fadhl to extricate him from his embarrassments with the nearer Subaihi tribes (3). By June, Tremenheere was complaining of the usually impertinent Haushabi replies to Residency letters (4). He asked for, and in September obtained, permission to pay the Haushabi stipend every 2 months, instead of half-yearly. In November, 1871, there was a strong Fadhli raid, led by the chief's brother, Husain bin Ahmad, against the Haushabis. They seized a large quantity of sheep and

(1) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 27.1.71

(2) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 23.2.71

(3) p.2.52 note 2

(4) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 26.6.71 and G of I 1969 P of
16.9.71

camels (1).

Tremenheere had demanded that Ali bin Manaa should break his tribal obligation to give asylum to fugitives (2) and should expel five Merqashis who had lifted 12 camels off a caravan in Abdali territory in June, 1871 (3).

Tremenheere showed no understanding of Ali bin Manaa's predicament; he described the Haushabi as '... insolent and treacherous and altogether uncivilized ...' (4).

Tremenheere had little local experience; the views he expressed were necessarily based on the information and the views that he received from his staff. Salih Jaffer, the Residency interpreter, was the Abdali Chief's Agent in Aden from 1866; he was the Fadhli Agent from 1867; and in 1873 General J.W. Schneider, then Resident, admitted that Ali bin Manaa considered Salih biased in Fadhli bin Mohsin's favour (5). Captain W.F. Prideaux

(1) AIA, Aden News 1871, No. 22 of 10-17 Nov.

(2) Cf. with Merewether p.2.21 n.3 above.

(3) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 9.6.71

(4) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 25.8.71

(5) FO 78 2754 f69, Res - SGB, 28.12.73

described the Haushabi as having '... but little influence over his tribe and [being] of a quarrelsome and untrustworthy disposition ...'(1). Aden was visited by both Abdali and Fadhli leaders (2); whereas Ali bin Manaa did not visit it between 1870 and 1873, having lost confidence in the British.

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Abdali Aqrabi relations 1869-1871

Across the harbour from Aden lived the Aqrabi tribe whose people had originally been Upper Aulaqi mercenaries of the Abdali chief (3). They seized the newly built Abdali fort at Bir Ahmad late in the eighteenth century. At that period conditions in the Abdali area

(1) AIA 560 f723, Prideaux's Report of 18.1.72

(2) e.g. Aden News 1871, News No. 24 and No. 26.

Fadhli bin Mohsin and Husain bin Ahmad Fadhli both visited within a month of the Fadhli raid on the Haushabis.

(3) Statement by the late Mubarak bin Salih al-Aulaqi, brother of the Upper Aulaqi Sultan, to the writer, at Bir Ahmad, in 1959.

were disturbed. The Aqrabis maintained their independence and earned a reputation for courage (1). They were fortunate that the site of Bir Ahmad was not on a water-course and was relatively malaria-free and so more healthy than that of Lahej (2). The Aqrabis strengthened themselves by an alliance with the Fadhlis before the British occupied Aden. The value of this alliance ended when the Fadhlis were forbidden to raid Abdali territory in 1867.

Evidence of revived Abdali ambitions in the Aqrabi area occurred after the Aqrabi sale of the Little Aden peninsula to Britain in 1869 (3). The transaction was supposed to be secret (4). Negotiations had been begun through the Mansab of Aden, Seiyid Alawi bin Zain AlAidroos. The Arabic document for the sale was prepared by Salih Jaffer acting as Residency Interpreter. Shortly afterwards, Salih Jaffer was sent on duty to

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.156

(2) Sinker 'Keith-Falconer' pp.234 & 237 makes no mention of malaria at B. Ahmad in 1887. It is mentioned at Lahej (p.233).

(3) IOL, AR, AAR 1868/69, para. 39 and Aitchison 'Treaties' No. XLI of 2.4.69

(4) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560 f 560

Lahej. On Salih's return, Fadhl bin Mohsin wrote from Lahej complaining that the area sold was Abdali, not Aqrabi, territory.

Brigadier W.M. Coghlan had made an agreement in 1863 with the Aqrabi Shaikh which provided that Little Aden should not be sold to foreigners (1). Coghlan, after 8 years in Aden, had no doubt that the peninsula was an Aqrabi possession (2). He had long wanted to acquire it, and had often discussed its purchase with his Assistants, Captain Playfair and Mr. Rassam (2). But, having acquired Perim on his own initiative, Coghlan could not suggest a similar initiative at Little Aden until the criticism over his occupation of Perim had quietened down. He had, however, considered the status of Little Aden carefully (3). His local informant was Seiyid Alawi bin Zain who was then the Abdali chief's agent in Aden. The Seiyid was also Mr. Rassam's intermediary

(1) IOL, Pol. Dept. IO D0 '62-73, page 23, Kaye to Coghlan 18.2.63

(2) IOL, Pol. Dept. IO D0 '62-73, Coghlan to Kaye, 13.12.62

(3) IOL, Pol. Dept. IO D0 letters '62-73. Memo by Kaye of 6.10.62 quoting a letter from Mr. Rassam

with the Yemeni tribes. As the Mansab of Aden and a religious leader, he was respected by the tribes. He had every opportunity of assessing correctly where the rights to ownership lay.

It is difficult to see how the Abdali chief could have had any effective claim to, or control over, Little Aden. It was not contiguous to the Abdali area and the Abdalis had no coastal settlement after losing Aden. The Abdali chief did not control the Subaihis. On the Hydrographic Office Chart of the Gulf of Aden, the 'Akrabi Tribe' was marked between Bir Ahmad and the anchorage of 'Bander Feikam' [Bir Fuqum Bay] (1). Beyond, to the west, the 'Subeihi Tribe' was written in. The Abdali area did not approach Little Aden.

During the Resident's absence on leave, the young and impetuous Captain Goodfellow was officiating as Resident; he reacted as if the Abdali claim was justified. He demanded that the Aqrabi Shaikh should refund the purchase price and he accused Seiyid Alawi of misleading the Residency staff (2). Plainly, Abdali influence upon

(1) Admiralty Chart based on Haines 1836 Survey and revised by the RN Surveys of 1860 and 1871.

(2) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560, Rev. G. Badger to Resident on behalf of Seiyid Alawi, 2.3.71.

Goodfellow was strong. It was possibly exercised through Salih Jaffer. Goodfellow was offered back the purchase price by the Aqrabi chief in exchange for the return of the Aqrabi's signed agreement to the sale. That Goodfellow refused, so the Aqrabi kept the purchase money; but Goodfellow continued to doubt the validity of the Aqrabi claim. When Russell returned to Aden, the Resident chided Seiyid Alawi for allowing the purchase to be made from the Aqrabi, and not from the Abdali chief. Only after an intervention by Mr. Rassam did Russell accept that the Seiyid had acted correctly. Fadhl also proposed action against the Aqrabis to recover Hiswa. He asked for the assistance of the Residency steamer, so that he could attack the Aqrabis from Aden harbour. His request was refused.

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How the British acquired rights at Hiswa

Hiswa was mainly valuable for the water drawn from it for Aden; it provided 5,000 gallons daily (1). The

(1) L/P&S/6 Letters & Encl. from B^o, Res - SGB 19.3.72,
21.9.72 forwarded to S of S 23.1.73

area had been transferred to the Seiyid by the Aqrabis in 1849. That transfer was acknowledged by the ruling Abdali chief, thus admitting that the area was not claimed by him. But, when the Seiyid made arrangements to sell the water, the Abdali chief claimed that any such right belonged to him. That claim was rejected by Badger, writing on Seiyid Alawi's behalf (1). Land and water rights were not separate. In this case, there were, of course, no riparian landowners below Hiswa who could claim to suffer from an abnormal withdrawal of water above their land.

The Aqrabis disputed the Abdali claim because an effective occupation of Hiswa would have placed the Abdalis astride the caravan route from Bir Ahmad to Aden and would have threatened Bir Ahmad. Aqrabi Abdali hostilities began again; and, in 1850, involved the British when the Aqrabis mistook a watering party from the 'Auckland' for official British naval support for the Abdalis (2). Later, Fadhl bin Mohsin claimed that Captain

(1) p.2.37 n.2 above

(2) Hunter 'Aden' p.166. Hunter did not understand the reason given by Badger in Note 1 above

Haines had asked the Abdalis to take action, on behalf of the British, against the Aqrabis. Fadhl claimed that Haines had thereby recognised Abdali authority over the Aqrabis, and Fadhl hoped to recover Aqrabi territory. Fadhl was prepared, as an alternative, to claim from the British the subsequent expense of Abdali operations against the Aqrabis.

In 1854, Hiswa was recognised by Resident Sir James Outram as being the property of Seiyid Alawi. The claim was not disputed then by either the Aqrabis or Abdalis. Outram held a meeting there with tribal leaders at which Badger was present as interpreter and tribal adviser to the Resident. The Seiyid offered the area to Outram (1). It was not officially annexed but Outram and his successors did establish a Government garden there to grow vegetables for Aden; and a British fort was constructed and manned to protect the garden in 1866 (2).

The Abdali chief retaliated for the sale of Little Aden by threatening action in 1869 against Seiyid Alawi and against the Aqrabis. Goodfellow told the Seiyid that

(1) IOL, AR, AIA 560 f 551 - Badger of 19.4.71 to Tremenheere.

(2) Hunter 'Aden' p.68

Fadh1 bin Mohsin claimed MT\$9000 in unpaid rent for the Seiyid's use of the Hiswa area. A case was brought against the Seiyid in the Aden Qadhi's Court by Fadh1 bin Mohsin. The Qadhi and the Seiyid were on bad terms; and the Qadhi refused Seiyid Alawi's request to adjourn the case to allow time to prepare an answer. Judgement was awarded in Fadh1 bin Mohsin's favour. Seiyid Alawi feared that he would be imprisoned for debt if he did not settle with the Abdali chief. He therefore paid MT\$6000 through Salih Jaffer, who had offered his services as an intermediary. According to the Seiyid, a receipt which Salih promised was never forthcoming. The background to this case probably contributed to Goodfellow's original conviction that the Abdali chief had documentary claims in the area which invalidated any Aqrabi right to sell Little Aden.

Seiyid Alawi's account of the events, as set out by Badger, leads to suspicion of Salih Jaffer's integrity (1). But Badger had strong prejudices against the latter's father, '... a scoundrel', who was only sent out of Aden because of the insistence of Captain S.B. Haines' assistant...'.

(1) p.2.37 n.2

Badger also disapproved of Haines. Badger carried his dislike of the father into a suggestion that Salih Jaffer had apparently misled General Russell so that the latter did Seiyid Alawi 'a grave injustice' by accepting Abdali claims to Hiswa. Badger was, however, supported by Brigadier W. Coghlan. The latter described Seiyid Alawi as '... the best and truest friend Her Majesty's Government had ...' in Aden, and a particularly valuable friend during the Indian Mutiny (1).

Russell wished to avoid an Abdali-Aqrabi conflict over Hiswa. The Abdali chief alleged that he had '... listened to him [Russell] and felt a firm consideration [sic] that [he] should obtain ... these Akrabees ... under [Abdali] rule ... or compensation for the large sum of money ... expended ...' at Haines' request against the Aqrabis from 1850 (2). But the Resident had no authority for intervening in Aqrabi or Abdali affairs, or for suggesting that past Abdali expenses would be reimbursed. Whatever settlement Russell

(1) AIA 560, Coghlan - Tremenheere, 17.4.71

(2) IOL, ~~AK~~, AIA 560 f 495, Fadhl bin Mohsin - Tremenheere, 27.6.71

could achieve between the two tribes depended upon his personal powers of persuasion. Russell first persuaded the Aqrabi chief to surrender his claims to the Hiswa area to the British, arguing that that was better for the Aqrabi than the insecurity of feuding with the Abdalis. Russell then secured Abdali recognition of British control, although Fadhl bin Mohsin said, after Russell's departure in December 1870, that he expected a large reward for his compliance (1).

Russell had asked Bombay to approve a payment of MT\$5000 to the Abdali chief, in settlement of the latter's claims in the Aqrabi area, in the autumn of 1870. The Residency's letter was overlooked in Bombay, and, for nearly a year no action was taken (2). The silence was embarrassing to the new Resident, General C.W. Tremenheere, who had arrived early in December, 1870. It weakened his position vis-à-vis Fadhl bin Mohsin and placed Tremenheere on the defensive, when the unanswered Abdali claims were

(1) AIA 560 f 518, Fadhl b. Mohsin - Tremenheere,
16.11.71

(2) AIA 560 f 479 para. 2 of G.B^o's 3754 of 15.8.71
- For. Dept., G of I.

again pressed in June 1871.

By June, 1871, Tremenheere had been forced reluctantly to depend upon Fadhl bin Mohsin in delicate negotiations with the Subaihis. Tremenheere's own mistakes further weakened his influence as Resident over the Abdali chief. Fadhl bin Mohsin advised Tremenheere to adjudicate the Abdali Aqrabi claims personally, or to remain outside the quarrel and leave the two tribes to settle the issue finally by war (1). Fadhl was confident that he could coerce the Aqrabi on his own, if the Resident did not wish to be troubled. Fadhl was however to be disappointed (2). Aqrabi independence was recognised by the Bombay Government and the Abdalis were offered an ex-gratia payment of MT\$2500 in settlement of all their claims in the Aqrabi area. That decision deprived the Abdali chief of his earlier freedom of action. Other factors may have influenced Fadhl bin Mohsin. He may have had second thoughts on the practicality of collecting enough money or mercenaries to overcome the

(1) AIA 560 f 497, Fadhl b. Mohsin - Tremenheere,
rec'd 27.6.71.

(2) p.2.45 n.2

600-odd, tough, Aqrabis. Or, he may have been concerned to maintain British goodwill as the extent of Ottoman successes in Asir became clear, bringing the likelihood of Ottoman intervention in the Yemen nearer(1). Fadhl may even have felt that his personal relations with Tremenheere had deteriorated so far that it would be unwise to defy him over the Aqrabis. In November, 1871, Fadhl renounced any intention of settling the dispute by force (2).

In the spring of 1871 there was a drought and forage was scarce (3). The Subaihis were, under ordinary conditions, poor; and, now being hungry, caravans passing through the Mansouri(4) section's territory were pilfered (5).

Subaihi interference interrupted Aden's supply of

(1) Cf. p.2.61 n.2

(2) IOL, AR, AIA f 518, Fadhl b. Mohsin - Tremenheere
3rd Ramadhan, 16.11.71

(3) IOL, AR, AIA 560, Res 124/858 of 2.6.71 to SGB

(4) See Map C

(5) IOL, AR, AIA 560, Res 66/453 of 24.3.71

cheaper quality qat (1) from the Maqtari area of Hajariya (2). This qat was popular with the poorer members of Aden's population. Its absence was keenly felt and resented. Any local impression of weakness that resulted from a failure to restore supplies was damaging to British prestige. The sale of qat was farmed-out as a monopoly to a concessionaire, who paid RS4000 p.a. to the administration. The concessionaire complained to the Residency about his losses. On several occasions, qat had been looted from caravans. In selecting the best bundles, in the centre of the packages, the protective packaging had been disarranged leading to much of the load drying out and so losing its value. Tremenheere failed to gain the Abdali chief's assistance to check this looting (3); he therefore felt obliged to intervene directly (3).

Tremenheere, and his Assistants, had insufficient

- (1) 'catha.edulis', a shrub growing in the Yemen and Abyssinian hills. Its shoots and small leaves were chewed for relaxation. The taste is bitter. The local effect is to stimulate the chewer and make him talkative.
- (2) IOL, AR, AIA 560, Res 73/521 of 7.4.71 to SGB
- (3) AIA 560 f 647, Fadhl bin Mohsin - Tremenheere, rec'd 26.3.71

information available about the Subaihi area to judge whether the Aden Troop should be used there; but Tremenheere had no choice if he was to take action. He later argued that he wished to operate directly, and not through the Abdali chief, against the Subaihis (1). The file records contradict Tremenheere's statement. It was only afterwards that he condemned his predecessors' excessive reliance on Fadhl; and even then, he did not think it politic to write that to Bombay; the criticism was crossed out in the draft in Tremenheere's handwriting.

Tremenheere's instructions to the Aden Troop's Commandant were vague; too much was left to Captain G.S. Stevens' discretion. The operation was definitely an offensive patrol. Stevens was to surprise the Subaihi Mansouri section and take '... the principal chiefs of the Tribe and bring them as prisoners to Aden ...' (2). That was not 'treating directly' with the Mansouris, as Tremenheere subsequently told Bombay his aim had been (3).

(1) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560, Res 103-691 of 4.5.71 - SGB

(2) AIA 560 f 617, Res. unno. note of 5.4.71 - Stevens

(3) AIA 560, Res 79/566 of 14.4.71 - SGB

But Tremenheere was then trying to reduce official censure for risking the Troop beyond reach of support and for involving the Residency in tribal affairs. Since Stevens had been at Aden under two years, he could not have 'treated directly' with the Subaihi tribesmen without an interpreter. He had no previous acquaintance with them and inadequate Arabic.

The incident illustrates how little information the Aden Residency possessed about the surrounding area in 1871 (1). Tremenheere did not know that Stevens would have to cover '... some seventy eight miles of bad ground ...' in 20 hours. The Troop had covered a considerable mileage in the 24 hours before that. It had gone originally to Lahej, believing that to be the best route to Dar alKudaimi. They then retraced their steps to Bir Ahmad. There they obtained a guide. When the Troop met some tribesmen whom the guide identified as the caravan looters there was no interpreter to act as an intermediary and to explain to the startled tribesmen what was required of them (2). Stevens and his men were

(1) IOL, AIA 560, Stevens Report of 8.4.71 - Res., para. 16

(2) Cf. AIA 560 f 659, Abdali chief's letter to Tremenheere of 14.4.71 expressed his view that an intermediary was essential.

unsupported, in unfamiliar country and facing unknown adversaries. There were only 13 of the latter, and they were heavily outnumbered by a better armed enemy, but the terrain was unfavourable for cavalry and familiar to the tribesmen. Both sides were suspicious of the other. It is not surprising that a sharp fight occurred. 8 tribesmen were killed, 3 escaped and 2 were captured.

Stevens reported that the Troop had entered the foothills of the Yemen mountains behind the coastal plain. They had crossed over a low pass through the first range of foothills to reach their objective. Once firing began, neighbouring tribesmen were aroused. They were seen running along the hillside, between the Troop and the coastal plain, to secure positions overlooking the pass so that they could prevent the Troop retreating to safety. The Troop's horses were tired after hard going over difficult country. Some were heavily loaded carrying two riders to transport the prisoners and troopers whose horses had been killed in the first action. The party retreated in haste; by 'trotting out' the Troop reached the coastal plain with only stray shots at them from long range. But the margin of safety was narrow.

Tremenheere had been in Aden less than four months and none of his staff at the Residency knew the area where the operation occurred. The Resident had tried to countermand the operation after Stevens had left Lahej. Tremenhheere was an Engineer, not a Cavalry officer, but his use of the Troop might have been acceptable, if it had been operating on the coastal plain. There, the Troop would have dominated the tribesmen and the latter would have had no chance of escape. Tremenhheere had believed that the tribesmen would have surrendered once their escape was cut off. He had rashly instructed Stevens to find, and bring in, the looters, without warning him not to operate beyond the coastal plain. He did not send Bombay a copy of these operational instructions; and Bombay never asked for one.

The Government of India approved Stevens '... commendable vigor [sic] and judgement in the difficult circumstances in which he found himself placed ...' (1). But the Foreign Department realised clearly from Stevens' report how narrow the margin had been between success and an

- (1) AIA 560, For. Dept. (Aitchison) letter of 4.7.71
forwarded to Res. by SGB 10.8.71

expensive fiasco. A retaliatory operation would then have been necessary to restore British prestige. Such an operation was beyond the capacity of Aden's existing garrison. A military reverse had been avoided by good luck and by Stevens' leadership, but the operation was still a British involvement in Yemeni tribal affairs. That was contrary to official policy; and Tremenheere was reprimanded (1). Once the incident had occurred, Tremenheere was anxious to extricate the Residency from Subaihi affairs without incurring further criticism. In the absence of experienced British advisers Tremenheere was obliged to turn to the Abdali chief as his intermediary. The Abdali had told Tremenheere before the operation that he was unable to prevent the Subaihis raiding his own subjects (2). The chief's first reaction was to welcome Stevens' operation (3). Later, he criticised aspects of

(1) ~~AR~~, AIA 560, For. Dept. G of I, No. 1379P of 4.7.71 sent with SGE 3670 of 10.8.71 to Res.

(2) p.2.46 n.3

(3) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560 f 659, English translation (only) of Abdali letter of 14.4.71 - Res.

it; and he assured the Resident rather brazenly that, had he been asked, '... he would have brought the offending chiefs and their followers into Aden to be dealt with ...' as the Resident thought fit (1). The Abdali chief conveniently forgot his earlier protestations of impotence. He had an interview with the Resident on 9.5.71, after the Resident had reluctantly left to him all arrangements for settling the British differences with the Subaihis (2). Tremenheere was reluctant to trust Fadhl because he believed that the Abdali chief encouraged the Subaihi looting of caravans (3). Fadhl, for his part, tried to strengthen his own position. He suggested that the Resident should confer with him as to '... the best means of settling the country ...' whenever cases like the current Subaihi difficulty arose (2).

Fadhl bin Mohsin had begun by warning the Resident in April of the need to conciliate the Atifis (4).

(1) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560, Res 103-691 of 4.5.71 - SGB

(2) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560 f 685, Memo of Interview

(3) AIA 560, p.673, Tremenheere's 103/691 of 4.5.71
- SGB, para. 11

(4) See Map D

Three of their tribesmen had been killed by the Aden Troopers. Fadhl bin Mohsin expected that the Atifis would seek revenge (1). But it appears that the Abdali chief did not then realise that he would be Tremenheere's intermediary. It is possible that Salih Jaffer explained Tremenheere's dilemma and led Fadhl to realise how he might profit as an intermediary by the Resident's difficulties. Once Fadhl was appointed as the intermediary with the Subaihis, he disregarded his own earlier advice to the Resident - and the Atifi claims. Fadhl had his own quarrel with the Aqrabis (2). It therefore suited him that the Atifis should be at feud with the Aqrabis. The latter had provided guidance for the Troopers to Dar al Kudaimi.

The Atifis made clear by June that they intended to pursue their feud; and that they recognised no right of the Resident to intervene between them and the Aqrabis (3). They were, however, prepared to accept blood money for

(1) AIA 560 f 659, Abdali chief - Tremenheere of 14.4.71

(2) See p.2.38- p.2.45

(3) AIA 560, Atifi letter - Res. rec'd 20.6.71

their men killed by the Aden Troop; and they were willing to accept a stipend for allowing travellers to pass through their territory. At the same time, they emphasized that they were Ottoman subjects under the Pasha at Hodaida. In the same month, the Atifis killed an Aqrabi. The Resident recognised that the murder was in retaliation for the Atifi deaths at Dar al Kudaimi. But he deleted that admission in his draft from his report to Bombay, possibly to avoid renewed censure (1).

Fadh1 arranged in May for stipends for the Rijai, Mansouri and Makhdumi sections of the Subaihi, on the grounds that the caravan route from Mafalis crossed Rijai territory and the route from Madrajah passed through the other two sections' territory. On the grounds that no caravan route passed through Atifi territory, that larger section were not offered a stipend. But, in fact, a very minor route did pass through Atifi country. It is possible that the Resident knew the relative strengths of the three favoured sections, but not the extent of their territories, when he accepted the Abdali chief's proposals.

(1) AIA 560 f 747, Res - SGB

A report was prepared at the Residency on the tribes near Aden in August (1).

The Abdali chief proposed a stipend of MT\$40 p.m. for the small Rijai section, with an estimated fighting strength of 30 men, and only MT\$25 p.m. each for the other two sections. The Makhdumis fighting strength was also 30, but the Mans^ouris were 300 strong. These 3 sections were the Subaihi sections nearest to the Abdali chief. They were potential raiders of Abdali crops and livestock. They were also poor and they were useful mercenaries who could be hired, publicly or secretly, for use against Fadhl bin Mohsin's enemies. It appears that the Rijais were treated most favourably because they were the most accessible section; because they possessed the only permanent settlement; and because Abdali influence over the Rijais could divert the caravan route from Mafalis away from Aqrabi territory into Abdali territory. The Aqrabis would lose, and the Abdalis gain, transit taxes. In addition, Rijai complicity would assist the Abdali chief to harass the Aqrabis.

The Resident spent a considerable sum of money

(1) AIA 560 f 747, Prideaux's Memo sent by Res - SGB, 25.8.71

through the Abdali chief during the latter's negotiations with these sections at Shaikh Othman. Tremenheere paid out MT\$1800, including MT\$500 representing Fadhl's expenses for hospitality (1). Since the Rijais had previously been accustomed to an annual present of MT\$12 p.a. from the Residency (2), they had reason to be impressed by the benefits of the Abdali chief acting as their spokesman, with Salih Jaffer as the Residency's (3).

The Resident described the proposed stipends to '... the three principal Soobahee Chiefs whereby traffic on the roads through their country will be entirely exempted from all dues ...' (4). He claimed that these stipendiary agreements would give the British '... an influence over the Soobahee tribe which has never hitherto been obtained and will prove an effectual check upon the predatory habits of the people ...' (4). It would be

(1) AIA 560 f 685, Memo of Abdali chief's interview of 9.5.71, para. 5

(2) AIA 560 f 21. According to a note in the file margin.

(3) AIA 560 f 685, as proposed by the Abdali chief at his interview with the Res. 9.5.71

(4) AIA 560 f 691, Res - SGB

easier to accept Tremenheere's assessment of the situation as his honest opinion, if he had not disguised the cause of the Atifi murder of an Aqrabi in June as due to '... a long standing blood feud ...' (1). Tremenheere's description of the three Subaihi sections was neither accurate nor responsible. Possibly Tremenheere was misled by the Abdali chief. But those sections certainly were not, as Tremenheere claimed, '... the principal [Subaihi] sections.'... Indeed, by August, Tremenheere admitted that the Subaihi were a very fragmented tribe. The chiefs of the Rijais and the Mansuris were described as '... treacherous and mean ...' (2).

The Government of India approved the agreements in August, 1871, but emphasised that '... in future as few engagements of this kind [should] be entered into as possible ...'. '... Our position at Aden by no means entails upon us the duty of making safe for travellers roads and tracts over any large portion of the district and deserts around the Fortress ...' (3).

(1) p.2.54 n.1 above

(2) AIA 560 f 712, Res - SGB, 25.8.71

(3) AIA 560 f 733, For.Dept., G of I, No.1799P of 25.8.71 quoted in B^o Resⁿ No 5044 of 20.10.71

The Atifis' reaction showed that the new agreements aroused jealousy and resentment amongst tribal sections who received nothing (1), whilst the sections which received stipends found them in time an insufficient inducement for giving up highway robbery (2).

Tremenheere's account of the affair was accepted by later writers (3). But Tremenneere had first intervened in internal Yemeni affairs when he sent the Troop out; and he then proceeded to make a much more lasting commitment to three insignificant sections without any authority to do so. He relied upon the Abdali chief, whom he did not trust, and had criticised at the end of February, to extricate himself from a situation which he did not understand. Ultimately, Tremenneere was considered locally as having arranged the tribal stipends as a form of blood-money payment, for the Subaihis (1). The Fadhli chief had asked Merewether

- (1) AIA 560 f 749, Shaikh Salih bin Rajih and others of the Atifis to the Resident, rec'd 20.6.71
- (2) Ingrams 'Arabia' p.111 quoting the Rijai chief
- (3) Hunter 'Aden' p.169

for comparable compensation for what had seemed to the Fadhli to be an unjustified attack (1). Merewether had refused, but he did report the demand, if not the reasons behind it, to Bombay. Tremenheere did not.

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Abdali ambitions in the Yemen

The collapse of central authority within the Dhu Muhammad confederation and the consequent decline in their influence in southern Yemen in 1871 apparently aroused Fadhli bin Mohsin's ambition. He informed Tremenheere by letter that he proposed to visit him at the end of January. During the interview that followed, Fadhli suggested that the British should intervene in Southern Yemen to rescue it from anarchy (2). He claimed to have had many requests for intervention and assurances of local support (3). He was confident that the country would accept British 'rule'. But his proposals,

(1) p.2.15 n.2

(2) IOL, AR, AIA 560, Res 19/147 of 27.1.71 - SGB

(3) AIA 560, Res 40/236 of 23.2.71, para. 6

understandably, gave a key role to his personal position, and he was nominally independent.

Fadh1 proposed that a force of 500 British troops, and a subsidy of R\$300,000 would be required. In return, he offered the British MT\$25,000 p.a., half the estimated annual revenue of the district. He emphasized that the British would then also control the coffee exports of Southern Yemen. The area Fadh1 proposed for occupation included Taiz, Ibb and Jibla. It covered much of the Shafai tribal territory of south Yemen. As an alternative, the Abdali chief proposed that he should act on his own, using tribal mercenaries and relying on the offers of local support that he had received. He had already begun collecting money for hiring mercenaries. He asked Tremenheere if the British would object to such an initiative on his part. Tremenheere gave him no encouragement. In the Resident's view, the operation would be expensive for the Abdali chief, and, if successful, the benefit might ultimately go to some mercenary leader, beyond British influence. Fadh1 would remain dependent upon his mercenaries. Tremenheere complained to Bombay that '... prosperity and the attentions which he received on ... his visit

to India [in 1870] appear to have turned [Fadh1's] head.!(1). Fadh1 had been invited to Bombay to be present during the Duke of Edinburgh's visit. Fadh1 was accompanied by Salih Jaffer, the Residency Interpreter, and they also visited Hyderabad.

By February, 1871, Fadh1 bin Mohsin was already concerned about Ottoman intentions in the Yemen (2). He asked the Resident what the Ottoman aims were in Asir. From reports Fadh1 had received from merchants in Mocha of remarks made by the Kaim Makam there, Fadh1 feared that Ottoman activities might expand southwards into the Yemen. He asked Tremenheere for his opinion. Tremenheere believed that he had reassured local opinion that the Ottomans would not move south towards Aden. But Fadh1 declared that he would postpone his own action in Southern Yemen until Ottoman intentions there were clearer.

Fadh1 continued his ostensible preparations for expanding his authority in the Yemen, undeterred by Tremenheere's coolness. In March, Tremenheere reported

(1) IOL, AQ, AIA 560, Res 40/286 of 28.2.71, para. 11

(2) As note 1 above, para. 4

a rumour that Fadhl was negotiating to acquire the Taiz district (1). In June, the proposal was described to Bombay in detail (2). The Residency information came from 'a confidential agent' of the chief of Taiz, Hasan bin Naji alBahr. It appears unlikely that the information would have come to Tremenhoe unless that suited Fadhl's purposes. The Residency appeared to have had no earlier contact with Hasan and it was in no way involved in the negotiations or in financing the scheme.

Fadhl had agreed to pay Hasan MT\$34,000 for control of Hajariya, with monthly payments of MT\$1,600 for a garrison of 200 soldiers who were to remain under Hasan's command (3). But the plan was never carried out. No explanation was given by the Resident why Fadhl did not go further. There were, however, formidable obstacles, apart from the continuing uncertainty over future Ottoman plans. The Abdali area was separated from Hajariya by the territory of the bitterly hostile Haushabi chief

(1) IOL, ~~AR~~, AIA 560, Res 69/461 of 25.3.71 - SGB

(2) AIA 560, Res 150/981 of 30.6.71 - SGB

(3) AIA 560, Res No.32 of 3.7.71 - S of S

to the north. The main trade route between Taiz and Lahej passed through difficult country under Haushabi control. The route to the west through the Subaihi country was less used, no easier, and possibly no safer for the Abdalis. Fadhl bin Mohsin's proposed occupation of Hajariya may have been a ruse to justify the collection of funds and mercenaries for a sudden attack on the Aqrabis. Fadhl reasserted his claims over the latter in June (1); and that month the Hajariya chief's 'confidential agent' gave the Residency details of the heavy expenditure to which Fadhl was committing himself. But Fadhl had no opportunity of using mercenaries against the Aqrabis in the cooler weather from October to April because the Government of Bombay's recognition of Aqrabi independence was received at Aden in September (2).

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First contacts with interior tribes

During the latter part of Merewether's, and the

(1) See p.2.44 n.1

(2) IOL, AR, AIA 560 f 499, G.B^os 3754 of 15.8.71 -
For.Dept.

first part of Russell's, period as Resident contact with the interior increased (1). Caravans could pass through Fadhli country in safety and most of Aden's supplies during 1867/68 were brought from or through, the Fadhli area, instead of the Abdali area as before (2). Aden's population was increasing rapidly by immigration. The Abyssinian expedition and Aden's use as a staging post for troops and ships for it had impressed the Yemenis. In 1868/69 '... more Chiefs [had] visited Aden to pay their respects and to become acquainted with the British Government than [had] ever come in before ...' (3). Members of the Fadhli and Abdali ruling families made more frequent visits to Aden and wanted closer contacts with the Residency than before; and the Abdali chief showed his trust in the British by asking to have his children educated in Aden (4). Strange visitors came from

(1) IOL, ~~AR~~, AAR 1867/68, para 18. From 1867

(2) As note 1 above, para 17. It was probably still suffering from the after effects of the earlier drought and epidemics.

(3) AAR 1868/69, para 35

(4) As note 3 above, paras 38 & 36. In the Yemen children were usually left as hostages of necessity and not from choice.

farther afield, too, and the more important ones included the son and brother of the Upper Aulaqi Sultan (1), who were the first official tribal visitors from their area. The Upper Aulaqi Shaikh, Farid bin Nasr, who was at feud with his neighbour, the Upper Aulaqi Sultan, arrived soon after to ask for help in his quarrel (2). He was told that Government policy prevented any such intervention in internal Yemeni affairs. These visits helped to strengthen the British claim to influence over a wide area in the interior when the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation occurred in 1873. At the time, these visits had little significance; and Lahej had long had connections with all these areas.

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Consideration of an expansion of Aden settlement from May 1870 to August 1871 to neutralize some effects of the opening of the Suez Canal

Brigadier E.L. Russell had recognised in the spring

(1) AIA 560 f 17, Res 41/287 of 23.2.71

(2) AIA 560 f 29, Res 94/655 of 27.4.71

of 1869 that the new Canal would '... make Aden an entrepot of European trade with the east and the chief coaling station ...' for shipping on that route (1). In his view, before the Canal was opened, the British position at Aden needed to be reassessed. Russell foresaw that the post would have a greatly increased strategic value and would need better defences. No attempt was made to suggest a new British policy towards the Yemen until June, 1870. It is possible that the Aden Annual Report for 1869/1870 provided the stimulus. In July, the Acting Secretary to the Government of Bombay, W. Wedderburn, submitted a Memorandum suggesting a new policy (2).

Wedderburn proposed that the whole Abdali area should be taken over so that '... foreign nations could be prevented from taking up positions manifestly antagonistic or injurious to British interests...'. He noted that the French had already acquired a foothold at Shaikh Saïd (3); and he anticipated the competition of other European nations, attracted into the area by the new opportunities

(1) AAR 68/69, para 68

(2) AIA 560, AG SGB, Memo of 5.7.70

(3) p.3.2 n.3

which the Suez Canal offered. He believed mistakenly that the Abdali area extended from 80 miles east of Aden up to the Straits of Bab el Mandeb - and the new French position at Shaikh Said. Possibly Wedderburn confused Playfair's description of the 'Province of Lahej' with the Abdali tribal area, of which Lahej was the centre (1). That error was corrected in a Memorandum which Sir William Merewether, then Commissioner of Sind, wrote on Wedderburn's proposals (2). The error was recognised at the Aden Residency too; a faded marginal pencil comment reads 'erroneous'.

Merewether's corrections of Wedderburn's ideas of the exaggerated size of the Abdali area, may have raised earlier doubts at the Foreign Department on the soundness of Wedderburn's proposals. Merewether admitted that he did not himself know the Abdali boundaries accurately. In June, 1871, C.U. Aitchison, the Foreign Secretary, rejected Wedderburn's proposal (3). One reason was that the Abdali borders were unknown to the Foreign Department, and to the Aden Residency; another was that such an

(1) Playfair 'Arabia' p.33

(2) AIA 560, Memo of 24.11.70

(3) AIA 560, Sec.For.Dept. - SGB, 2.6.71

annexation might conflict with '... possible claims to suzerainty on the part of the Turks ...'. It was not even certain, Aitchison pointed out, whether the whole south Arabian coast from Aden to the Straits would be covered. If it was not, Wedderburn's original purpose would not be achieved.

Aitchison suggested that the Aden Garrison needed a reliable water supply from Shaikh Othman, freedom of access to all parts of the Abdali area, and the abolition of Abdali transit dues on local produce to reduce the cost of living. Tremenheere was asked for his opinions as Resident in July, 1871 (1). He had recently been reprimanded for his rash use of the Aden Troop and he had had trying negotiations with the Subaihis through the Abdali chief (2). He was not in a strong position to undertake the 'judicious negotiations', which the Foreign Department suggested, to improve the British position. Unsure of himself, the Resident asked the Commandant of the Aden Troop for his comments on the Foreign Department's suggestions.

(1) AIA 560, SGB - Res, forwarding copy of For.Dept.

Memo, rec'd 28.7.71

(2) p. 2.56 n.1

Captain Stevens knew more about the surrounding area than other Residency officers, but that was not much. He did not favour stationing part of the Aden Garrison in Abdali territory: he thought, probably correctly, that a two-year term of duty in Aden was too short a period for the establishment of mutual understanding between British or Indian troops and the local population (1). Stevens, mistakenly, believed that summer sandstorms would have made the Lahej area an unsuitable station for European troops in summer. Sandstorms were worse inland than in Aden. But summer nights were much cooler in the coastal plain than in Aden, where the volcanic hills retained the heat after sunset (2). Tremenheere accepted Stevens' arguments against basing some of the garrison at Lahej, although he wrote that he believed that the Abdali chief would '... gladly allow our troops to be stationed ...' there (3). There is no evidence in the current file that Tremenheere ever asked the Abdali chief if he would agree.

Stevens had suggested that an agreement to ban a

(1) AIA 560, Stevens Memo of 31.7.71

(2) Writer's personal experience

(3) AIA 560, para 3, Res - SGB, 25.8.71

foreign occupation of Khor Umeira might be advantageous: he did not know who owned the anchorage, but he was prepared to go and find out in the cool season.

Tremenheere in his reply omitted any mention of Khor Umeira. It was near Atifi territory and he had no intention of allowing the Aden Troop to go near it. Instead, Tremenheere commented that he was opposed to distant commitments which might require patrols through the country of the more distant tribes, which might regard them '... as an unusual or threatening display of force ...'. Tremenheere was cautious after his earlier experience with the Subaihis and the Aden Troop.

Tremenheere suggested that the Abdali strip of coast between the Khor Maksar and Hiswa might be secured with advantage '... to allow of access entirely through British territory to Little Aden ...'. The description was not accurate. The Hiswa area did not extend up to Little Aden. But Tremenheere may have believed that British control of the Abdali shore of Aden Harbour would reduce the chance of Abdali Aqrabi hostilities; and that the Aqrabis would be willing to give up the barren coastline between Hiswa and Little Aden, if asked ...

Tremenheere's most sensible comment came on familiar engineering ground; he proposed that Aden's Executive Engineer should be provided with a Royal Engineer Assistant so that plans could be prepared for improving Aden's water supply. Once that had been done, the Abdali chief could be approached for his agreement. Tremeneheere also proposed that once the Indian Government had agreed to provide funds, negotiations could begin for commuting transit dues within Abdali territory. Neither proposal received the attention it deserved because each involved capital expenditure and a probable recurrent demand for money, beyond Aden's local resources.

Wedderburn's proposal might have provided a basis for a constructive new policy that defined British aims in the Yemen more clearly. But its presentation was vague and factually inaccurate. Wedderburn preferred to get the Foreign Department's agreement to the principle of a new policy before asking for detailed comments from the Resident at Aden. That was probably a mistake. It was also unfortunate that the ineffective Tremeneheere was the Resident who was asked for his observations on Aitchison's compromise proposals. If action had been taken in 1871, or in 1872, the Anglo Ottoman confrontation

in the Yemen in 1873 might have been avoided.

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The Fadhli-Yafai dispute over irrigation water in Abyan

Crops on the Fadhlis' fertile lands in eastern Abyan depended upon the reliability of their water supply down the Naza irrigation canal from its junction with the Wadi Bana, well within Yafai limits (1). This channel left the east bank of the Wadi Bana near AlMisana and passed across the Abyan plain, dominated by the Yafai positions at AlHusn and at Khanfer (2). The Naza canal watered the lands of the Haidera Mansour tribe between that channel and the Wadi Hasan. The channel then crossed the Wadi Hasan to water the lands of AlKhaur and Teran, belonging to the Fadhli chief.

The Yafais had lost control of the hamlet of Jawala in 1837, recovered it briefly in 1866 during the Anglo-Abdali operations against the Fadhlis, and had then lost it again. The Yafai claim remained a source of friction.

(1) See Map E

(2) Belhaven 'Road' p.149

into the 20th century (1). But Tremenheere dealt solely with the Fadhli Yafai dispute over the Naza Canal water in May, 1872, when Tremenheere tried to mediate between the tribes (2). That was but one of many disputes. As Captain Playfair was an accepted authority on Yemeni affairs, and as the Residency probably had a copy of his book, 'Arabia Felix', which mentioned Yafai claims in Abyan, Tremenheere might be expected to have known about them.

Tremenheere was misguided in mediating when he lacked the power to enforce his arbitration. He was also unauthorized to intervene in inter-tribal disputes. Yet he was behaving as the representative of a paramount power when, without physical force in reserve, there can be no governing power. Still more unrealistically, Tremenheere believed that the small annual payment of MT\$25 p.a. to the Lower Yafai chief from the Fadhli would be more attractive because the Fadhli agreed to abolish transit dues on trade, to and from Abyan, in return for an enhanced stipend of MT\$80 p.m. to the Fadhli chief. Tremenheere should have realised that the Lower Yafai chief would receive little personal benefit from the

(1) Ingrams 'Arabia' p.132

(2) IOL, AR, AAR 1872/73 (no para nos.)

abolition of Fadhli transit dues, and that he would want more money for himself for the Naza water.

The Lower Yafai representative at the negotiations was the son of the chief, Ahmad bin Ali bin Ghalib (1). There is a reference to the chief's eldest son visiting Aden in July, 1871, but there is no indication that he had the same friendly relations as the Fadhli chief, who even came to borrow money from Salih Jaffer, the Fadhli Aden Agent, for operations against the Yafais (2). The Yafai would have been at a disadvantage in Aden, in less familiar surroundings than the Fadhli, Haidera bin Ahmad, whose friend was Tremenheere's interpreter. The Lower Yafai chief repudiated his son's agreement, and, within a year, there was fiercer border fighting than before between Fadhli and Yafais (3). Tremenheere's intervention in Abyan was as inept, and as unfortunate in its results, as his interventions with the Subaihis and with the Haushabis.

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(1) IOL, ~~AK~~, News Report No. 6, 20-27.7.71. Chief from 1841 - Sept 1873

(2) AIA 728, Memo of conversation, Res - Fadhli Sultan, 4.11.76

(3) AIA 625, News No. 18 of 1873, 25-30.4.73 & No.5

Section 3. Anglo-Ottoman Relations in the Yemen1865 - 1873

Successive Residents, and the Bombay Government, regarded any foreign expansion in the Yemen with distaste. The Foreign Department and the India Office took a less possessive view of Ottoman expansion, until 1873. The Foreign Office, preoccupied with European politics, showed minimal interest in Ottoman moves in the Yemen even in 1873. Developments are considered in three sections. Firstly; there were joint British and Ottoman objections to French interest in the Yemen coast. Secondly; there was Ottoman expansion in Asir in 1871, and in the Yemen in 1872. Thirdly; from January to December 1873, there was an Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in the southern Yemen.

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The Ottomans and the French at Shaikh Said and British reactions

In 1869, a Frenchman, living in Aden, negotiated the purchase of the shallow anchorage of Shaikh Said, at the south-west tip of the Yemen, from the Hakimi section of

the Subaihi tribe. This was a new area of French challenge to Ottoman claims. France had already extended along the North African shore; she had shown her interest in the Levant in 1860; and the Mediterranean seemed about to become a French lake (1). French activity in Egyptian trade and in the work of the Suez Canal had led to a growing French interest in the Red Sea. Obokh had been acquired in 1862 as a coal depot (2). The new French interest in Shaikh Said disturbed both the Ottoman Pasha at Hodeida and the Resident at Aden.

The Resident considered the sale valueless and illegal (3) because it did not have Ottoman approval. The Hakimi section acknowledged Ottoman Suzerainty and used Mocha as their market centre (4). But even the prospect of a French trading station without sovereignty was unwelcome to the Resident. He feared that such competition might attract the Hajariya coffee trade away

- (1) G. Hardy, 'Histoire de la Colonisation Française', Paris 5th edn 1947 p.200 (hereafter, Hardy 'Colonisation')).
- (2) FO 78 3187 Earl Cowdrey, HBM Amb. Paris - FO 6.6.62
quoted in Hertslet's FO Memo of 20.10.73
- (3) AAR 1868/69 para 42
- (4) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 3.6.70. The French flag was
hoisted at the end of May or early in June

from Aden (1). French sovereignty was worse (2). That was believed, mistakenly, to threaten the British occupation of nearby Perim Island. At that time, French warships were more common than British ones. Local Anglo-Ottoman concern led to correspondence between the Resident and the Pasha at Hodeida (3). The Resident also arranged for a British naval survey of the anchorage (4).

British enquiries about the Porte's reactions, and about the French Company concerned, were made by the British Ambassadors in Constantinople and in Paris, at the India Office's request (5). The Porte announced its intentions to send two or three small warships to protect Ottoman interests and to patrol the Yemen coast (6). British

(1) AIA 532, Res - SGB, 31.12.69

(2) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 3.6.70. The French flag was hoisted at the end of May or early in June

(3) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 11.2.70 refers

(4) PRO Admiralty 127/11, Res - Commodore Sir Leopold Heath, 10.6.68 and Res - Capt. Colomb of H.M.S. Dryad, 21.10.68

(5) FO 78 5837 HBM C d'A C'ple - FO, 11.4.70

AIA 532 For. Dept.'s 1216 P - Ag SGB fi. Res. Aden
Received at Aden late May, or early June, 1870.

(6) PRO Admiralty 127/11, Copy of Sir H. Elliot's dispatch - FO of 14.5.70 sent to Commodore Heath by Admiralty, 5.7.70

maps, officials (1), and writers (2) described all S.W. Arabia west of Hadhramaut as "the Yemen", so the British, in their anxiety to see the French displaced, had inadvertently encouraged the Porte to increase Ottoman interest in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. A small Ottoman garrison of 40 men was established at Shaikh Said early in 1871 (3).

Embassy enquiries in Paris, made unofficially, revealed that the French Company concerned had issued a fanciful, and slightly anglophobe, share prospectus to persuade French investors to finance the new settlement (4). But the limitations of the anchorage were demonstrated during a storm in March, 1871. Four small French vessels at anchor were damaged or wrecked. That damage confirmed earlier British (5) and French (6)

(1) e.g. Hunter 'Aden'. Sketch map facing p.86

(2) e.g. Palgrave 'Arabia'. Map facing p.1

(3) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 27.1.71

(4) FO 78 5387, HBMA Paris - FO, 15.3.70

(5) AAR 1868/69 para 42.

(6) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 3.6.70

naval criticism of the anchorage. Late in 1871, the French traders abandoned their unproductive settlement (1). It had never had a staff of more than five Frenchmen, with Egyptian and Aden-recruited workmen (2). But French sources continued, throughout the century, to raise periodic claims to Shaikh Said (3). The Residents at Aden remained watchful against, and jealous of, French competition throughout the area.(4).

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The Ottoman proposal to occupy Husn AlGhorab

In 1869, the Ottomans informed the British of their intention to occupy this sheltered anchorage about 230 miles east of Aden. The Resident grumbled that he had

(1) AIA 560 Aden News of 22-30.12.71

(2) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 23.2.71

(3) FO 78 5388 French newspaper 'Republique' of 30.1.1901 published an article claiming the territory as French.

(4) p.6.75 n.2

'... no faith in Orientals ...', but he could find no cause for objecting to the establishment of a much-needed Ottoman quarantine station for pilgrims there (1). The isolated site was ideal. But, when troops were sent to Shaikh Said, the Ottomans proposed to establish their quarantine station there instead. Shaikh Said proved to be unsuitable. But the plans for using Husn alGhorab were not revived. Kamaran Island was used instead.

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The Ottomans in Asir and the Yemen

The Ottomans on the Tihama coast had limited contacts with the populations of south-west Arabia through trade and the pilgrim traffic before 1871. Ottoman administration was limited to the coastal ports; the Pasha had his headquarters at Hodeida; and there was an Ottoman KaimMakam at Mocha. On the African coast of the Red Sea, Suakin and Massawa were transferred by the Porte to Egyptian administration in 1865. Egyptian influence was carried farther south by Khedivial warships' visiting

(1) AIA 532, Res - SGB, 19.3.70

coastal anchorages. In 1867, Zeila, which had been under the Pasha at Hodeida since 1849, was transferred to Khedivial administration. But, within two years, the Porte came to view the Khedive's possible ambitions with some concern (1). Some Ottoman officials believed that the Asiri revolts of 1869 and of 1870 were encouraged by the Khedive.

The Ottomans wished to maintain their control of the Hejaz with its links with all the Muslim world. But the Wahhabis of Nejd had occupied Mecca previously in 1803 and had been believed to threaten the whole Ottoman Empire (2). It was necessary that the Ottomans should have some control over the adjoining areas. That necessity was emphasized by the Asiri attack on Hodeida in 1870. The Asiris and Nejdīs were customary allies (3). Asir, the Yemen and Nejd were not under Ottoman control; nor was the Rashidi area farther north. W.G. Palgrave forecast in 1867 that the Wahhabis might still prove a

(1) 'Annual Register' for 1869, p.273-278

(2) T.P. Hughes 'Dictionary of Islam', p.660, London 1885. (Hereafter Hughes 'Islam').

(3) Palgrave 'Arabia' p.297

serious threat to the Ottomans (1). These dangers were the more serious because of the Ottoman weakness through the failings of Abdul Aziz as Sultan. Between 1870 and 1872 the Ottomans took action in all four areas (2).

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The expansion of Ottoman authority in Asir

The Ottoman invasion of Asir in 1871 was, according to the Resident in Aden '... watched with much distrust and suspicion by all the tribes ...' of the Yemen (3). In a widely distributed proclamation, the Ottoman Commander explained that the expedition was to punish the Asiri chief, Muhammad bin Aidh, for rebelling against

(1) Palgrave 'Arabia' p.305

(2) Hasa and Nejd - J.B. Kelly 'Britain and the Persian Gulf, 1795-1880', Oxford, 1968, p.717-751. (Hereafter Kelly 'Gulf').

Shammar - Britannica 'Arabia' p.512

Asir and the Yemen p. 3.8 - 3.11

(3) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 27.1.71

the Ottomans and for attacking Hodeida. Copies of this proclamation, dated 8th January 1871, reached Aden (1). The Resident estimated the Ottoman strength at 20,000 troops (2); that was sufficiently imposing for the Asiris to offer their submission, providing that their territory was not invaded. Their condition was unacceptable to the Ottoman Commander, Redif Pasha, who demanded unconditional surrender. The Asiris refused.

The Ottomans had a quick and successful initial campaign. Four Ottoman Regiments, supported by four guns, captured the Asiri capital of Raida in a 17 day siege. Ottoman casualties were said to be less than 20 men; but the Asiris lost 200 killed, including their leader and 29 lesser chiefs. 450 Asiri prisoners were captured (3). But a subsequent Ottoman advance southward into the Yemen, through rugged mountain country towards Sanaa (4),

- (1) Referred to in note 2. There are however no copies in the file
- (2) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 27.1.71
- (3) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 4.5.71. The Resident's information came via an Indian merchant's clerk at Hodeida, from the letters of an Ottoman officer in Asir to another in Hodeida
- (4) AIA 560, News No 4 of 6-13.7.71

was halted by renewed Asiri resistance under the late chief's brothers. The Asiris made a surprise assault on Raida which was repulsed with the reported loss of 400 Asiris (1). Two Ottoman defenders were killed and four were wounded. The casualty figures suggest that the Asiris were badly armed with smooth barrelled flintlocks against the Ottomans' breech-loading rifles. It is probable that the Yemen tribes were as ill-armed (2).

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The Ottoman reoccupation of the Yemen

Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha, Muhammad Redif's second-in-command, was appointed Commander in Chief and Governor of the Yemen, when Redif returned to Constantinople sick (3). The occupation of the Yemen was reported to be planned to start in October, 1871, from Mocha, instead of overland from Asir. But, by December, Ahmad Mukhtar

(1) AIA 560, News No 5, 13-20.7.71

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.295-296

(3) AIA 560, Aden News Letter No 13 of 7-14.9.71

was still detained at Raida (1). Ottoman officials for the new administration in the Yemen had arrived at Hodeida from Constantinople (2). The officials were reported destined for Hodeida, Taiz, Sanaa, Odein, Jibleh and Ibb. The Ottoman advance into the interior developed during 1872. Sanaa was captured in April. The Resident reported growing anxiety amongst the Yemen tribes near Aden about Ottoman intentions in their areas (3).

The Resident warned of the danger to Aden's position of an Ottoman advance into southern Yemen and suggested that the Ottomans should be halted (4). The India Office passed Tremenheere's letter to the Foreign Office on 28th May, but no further action was taken. Further Indian Government letters were passed from the India Office to the Foreign Office on 13th August and on 29th October, on the same topic (5). Argyll saw these letters, but the

(1) AIA 560, Aden News No 17, of 6-14.10.71

(2) AIA 560, Aden News No 26 of 8-15.12.71

(3) AAR 1872/73 (no para nos) quoting the 1871/72 AAR, of which no copy is available

(4) LA, Res - SGB, 7.5.72 (r) S of S

(5) IOL, Z/L/P & S/3/104/4 Vol 83 (Index of letters)

Government of India had failed to make positive proposals on the Residency enquiries.

Since 1839, the Government's policy had been one of non-intervention in Yemen's tribal affairs. That policy had been re-affirmed in 1871 (1). Lord Mayo~~x~~ had been assassinated in February, and, until Lord Northbrook's arrival in September, Lord Napier of Ettrick, the Governor of Madras, was acting as Governor-General. Even after Lord Northbrook's arrival time was needed before any revision of policy.

Brigadier J.W. Schneider, appointed as Resident in July, had continued to press, like his predecessor, for a change of policy to prevent the Ottomans reaching Aden's border. His letter of October 26th to Bombay was copied to the Secretary of State. Schneider reported Ottoman demands on Lahej (2). Argyll had the letter before him from November 22nd to 24th. He then passed it to the Foreign Office, for information on the 26th. Lord Granville made no comment, but none had been asked for; and the Ottomans were still in the Yemen highlands,

(1) p.2.67 n.3

(2) LA, Res - SGB, 26.10.72, copied to S of S

outside areas of British interest for Aden. As the India Office and the Government of India proposed no action, there was no cause for the Foreign Office to suggest any. In addition, Granville believed that there were no grounds for Anglo-Ottoman disagreement anywhere, but a natural tendency for Ottoman Foreign Ministers to '... drift to [Sir Henry Elliot, the British Ambassador,] for advice and support ...' (1). But the Ottoman intention to occupy all the Yemen was apparently understood. The Resident's letter was summarized as; 'Lahej: wish of Turkey to obtain allegiance of the Sultan [of Lahej]' (2).

Argyll's own view of the relationship between the Home Government and the Indian Government was that policy should be determined by requirements at Westminster, but that there should be no interference in details concerning the functioning of the Indian executive (3). Argyll, therefore, probably considered in 1872/73 that any change in policy towards the Yemen tribes was a matter for the Government of India to raise. Certainly it did not

(1) ~~GP~~P. Granville - Elliot, 20.9.71

(2) IOL Z/L/P & S/3/104/4 Vol 83, Letter No 2803

(3) BM, SPR, PD, 1874, Vol CCXVIII p.1066, Argyll on 24.4.74

concern Foreign Office relations with the Porte, until a new Indian policy towards the Ottomans in the Yemen had been decided. The Foreign Department did not suggest any revision of the existing policy, and until the Viceroy did so, the Secretary of State could pay no attention to such requests from subordinate Governments or officials. Argyll and Lord Salisbury believed that the Secretary of State should not diminish the dignity and authority of the Viceroy, by interfering in the Viceroy's administration, particularly when the new telegraphic connections between India and Europe provided new temptations for such interference from 1870 (1). So the Resident remained embarrassed at the absence of an official statement of British policy towards the Ottoman occupation of the Yemen, because he could give the Abdali chief no clear advice.

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(1) BM, SPR, Vol CCXVIII 1874, p.1082, commenting on action during the Bengal famine

Sir Bartle Frere was appointed as head of the Commission for the suppression of the East African Slave trade in 1872 (1). On his journey across Europe, Frere had stopped in Paris. There, the Commission's Secretary, the Rev. G.P. Badger, had talked with Server Pasha, Ottoman Foreign Minister in 1871, and Ottoman Ambassador in Paris in November, 1871. Monsieur de Rémusat, the French Foreign Minister, was also present; he had talked to Badger about Ottoman claims to Arabia as they had been described to the French. Probably, French interest in Shaikh Said (2), had led to Franco-Ottoman discussions on Ottoman claims in Arabia. Monsieur de Rémusat did not question the validity of Ottoman claims.

Frere took Server Pasha's claim, that the Ottoman Empire included all Arabia, so seriously that he asked Badger to record it in a Memorandum to the Foreign Office. In Badger's view, Ottoman authority extended along the Red Sea from Suez to Mocha only. But Badger had left Aden in 1862. Conditions had changed much since then. Frere had retired from India in 1867 and

(1) See R.J. Gavin "The Bartle Frere Mission to Zanzibar, 1873", The Historical Journal, Vol 122, p.48

(2) See 3.1-5 above

he possibly had not appreciated fully the opportunities that the opening of the Suez Canal had offered to Ottoman communications around the coasts of Arabia. Frere had some justification for accepting Badger as an expert on South Arabian Coastal affairs.(1). In Badger's biased view the Ottoman claims to the whole coastline were 'preposterous', but he believed that; '... there is every possibility that the Turks will lose no time in endeavouring to enforce them ...'. Such action would, he believed, increase conflict and competition in the area to the disadvantage of local and British interests (2).

Badger was a missionary and a clergyman, not a Secretariat Officer or a lawyer by profession, and his interpretation of the nature of the Mukalla Anti-Slave trade treaty of 1863 was distinctly idiosyncratic (3). He argued that such treaty arrangements virtually

- (1) IOL, L/P & S/8/10 Vol 50, Sir John Kaye, Sec.,
P & SD - Brigadier Coghlan, Resident of Aden,
5.12.62, referred to Badger as an expert on Yemeni
affairs
- (2) PRO FO 78 3186 f 189-200, Badger's Memo
- (3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No. LXXIII

recognised local chiefs' independence. But the Indian Government had, since 1856, carefully avoided any commitment to maintaining local tribal independence in anti-slave trade treaties.

Badger and Frere were concerned to counter any proposed extension of Ottoman influence in Southern Arabia leading to Ottoman control over ports there because they feared that an Ottoman presence would assist the slave trade from Africa. Local ships would benefit from Ottoman flag cover to protect them from R.N. searches. This bias was not wholly justified. The import of slaves into the Empire had been banned by Imperial firman in 1856; and Ahmad Ayub Pasha, while Governor General of the Yemen, was to declare a penalty of five years in prison for convicted slave-importers (1). Badger, however, wished Britain to declare a sphere of influence along the south Arabian coast to '... prevent further mischievous aggression on the part of the Turks ...'. Frere was to develop Badger's theme in January, 1873, in correspondence with Argyll and Granville (2).

(1) AIA 621, Aden News No 29, 10-16.7.73

(2) p. 3.22 n.1&2 below

The Foreign Office and the Foreign Department received Badger's Memorandum coolly. C.U. Aitchison, Secretary at the Foreign Department, disagreed with Badger's idea that the Porte might look to Russia as a new protector of Muslim interests (1). It is possible that Frere's views had influenced Badger's Memorandum. Frere had believed that Russia and France would seize any opportunity of replacing British influence in the Indian Ocean area (2). Frere reacted strongly when he found the Resident in Aden in despair at apparent official indifference to the prospect of an Ottoman advance up to Aden (3).

Indian policy in S.E. Arabia had required limited British intervention in internal affairs, whereas the policy in the Yemen was one of non-intervention. Frere had been a firm believer in active interference from Bahrain to Ras al Hadd, when necessary to protect maritime trade. 'Active interference' necessarily expanded British influence. But an active Ottoman naval, and possibly

- (1) IOL, AM Reel 318, Aitchison's comments of 30.12.73 to Northbrook on the Memo forwarded on by Northbrook to Argyll
- (2) IOL, Home Corr. Sec. Vol 62, Frere's Memo of 18.7.68, as a member of Political Committee at the India Office
- (3) p.3.13 n.2

political, presence along the south Arabian coast and in the Persian Gulf would reduce, and perhaps replace, British influence. A basis for Ottoman influence already existed, Frere recognised, in local respect for the Sultan as Caliph and for the Porte as the major Muslim Power (1).

Frere arrived at Aden aboard H.M.S. 'Enchantress' on 31st December (2). He stayed with Schneider at the Residency. Preparations had to be made for coal supplies for H.M.S. 'Enchantress' on her return from Zanzibar, to take Frere to Gulf of Aden ports. Frere would also have wanted local news about the slave trade (3); and Badger probably wished to revisit local friends. Frere considered Schneider 'excellent' (1). Schneider was visited on 2nd January by the agitated Abdali chief, Fadhl bin Mohsin. The chief had received a letter from Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha telling him to go to Sanaa to make his submission. Fadhl asked, again, for British

(1) IOL, NP, Frere - Northbrook, 19.5.73

(2) PRO Admiralty 53/10638, Log of H.M.S. 'Enchantress'

(3) AIA 619, Note of 16.12.72 by Schneider to give Frere copies of correspondence about the trade regionally

protection for his territory. Failing such a guarantee, Fadhl had to decide to submit to the Ottomans or to go into exile. Fadhl had been chronically short of money. He could not have expected a financially secure exile. Failing a definite assurance of British protection, Fadhl had probably no alternative but submission; and, after months of waiting for British action, Fadhl was unlikely to delay much longer. His family rival and elder brother, Abdullah, might possibly have been installed by the Ottomans if Fadhl displeased them.

Frere had no doubt that Lahej and the supplies of the coastal plain were strategically important for the British in Aden. Having passed through the new Suez Canal, Frere realised the increased importance of Aden as a port. Retaining Aden securely was '... a matter of prime necessity to our every interest in India, China and Australia ...' (1). Frere considered Aden '... the most important of all our outlying Indian possessions, and the key to our overland route ...' (1). In his view, danger to Aden should be viewed by a Governor of Bombay as only slightly less grave than danger threatening

(1) FO 78 2753, Frere - Elliot, Constantinople, 2.1.73

Bombay itself (1). Frere considered that Aden, without its hinterland, would always be at risk. That was an orthodox military view. Aden's '... chief supplies of grain and vegetables, forage and firewood, meat and fresh water ...' might be interrupted. Possibly Frere remembered Merewether's arguments to him in 1865/66 (2). Aden would only '... be fed badly and with difficulty and at vastly increased expense by importation from beyond the sea ...' (1). Possibly Frere encouraged Schneider to give the Abdali chief unauthorised assurances of British support to gain time.

Frere's subsequent actions show that he was committed to obtaining British Government support for keeping the Ottomans away from Aden's hinterland. He did not delay his departure beyond 4th January (3); he left at 5 p.m. (4); but he apparently left postdated telegrams about the situation, for dispatch by Schneider, if no reply had

(1) FO 78 2753, Frere - Elliot, Constantinople, 2.1.73

(2) p.2.15 n.1

(3) AIA 621, Aden News 26.12.72-1.1.73 foretold his departure date

(4) PRO ADM 53 10638, Log of H.M.S. 'Enchantress', 4.1.73

been received by 5th January to Schneider's urgent telegrams to the India Office of 3rd January, and to Bombay of 2nd January. Frere also wrote a hasty, alarmist, and superficially convincing, letter to Sir Henry Elliot, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, explaining why Ottoman action against the Abdali chief was '... grotesquely unjustifiable, or so little permissible by us ...' (1). That letter was written on 2nd January; it was copied and enclosed with covering letters written to Argyll (2), of the third, to Granville (1), of the fourth, and to Sir Philip Wodehouse, the Governor of Bombay (3). Frere enclosed a rough sketch map vaguely defining his idea of the northern limit of Aden's required hinterland. Possibly, these three letters, too, were left, like the telegrams, for Schneider to dispatch on the 5th, if necessary.

- (1) FO 78 2753, Frere - Elliot, 2.1.73, enclosed with
Frere - Granville, 4.1.73
- (2) AM Reel 318
- (3) N.P. Wodehouse - Northbrook, 20.1.73, enclosing
copy of Frere's letter to Elliot

Schneider's unanswered telegram to Bombay on 2nd January (1), and to the India Office on the 3rd (2), was temperate and conventional; "The Sultan of Lahej has just visited me expecting a hostile movement of the Turks against his Country. He claims our protection.

I request instructions by telegraph to my letter 229 of 26th October. Copy of which was forwarded to your Grace."

Frere's telegram was urgent and dramatic; "Turkish movements against Tribes round Aden very serious. Mooshir threatens Lahedj whence Aden draws supplies. Unless this be promptly stopped Mooshir will hold power to starve our garrison or quadruple our Commissariat expenses."

Merewether had had personal correspondence with Indian Office officials; Schneider probably had not (3). Nor had Schneider any previous experience of political work. Frere was able to write personal letters to

(1) LI, Enclosed with G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

(2) L/P & S/3/I04 Vol 97, U/S 10 - U/S FO, 6.1.73,
forwarding telegram

(3) L/PS/8/10 June 62 - 9 July 73. PD D/O correspondence

influential politicians and officials whom he knew.

He also possibly helped Schneider/^{to}plan a strategy for his subsequent use of letters and telegrams to maintain tension in London, while the crisis lasted (1).

Schneider, with his future career at stake, could not afford mistakes in unfamiliar circumstances. Frere's personal advice probably gave Schneider encouragement.

Certainly, Frere's telegrams and correspondence played a decisive part. Elliot was influenced (2); Argyll

took immediate action (3); so did Wodehouse (4);

Northbrook was encouraged (5); and Granville was probably influenced in drafting his instructions to Elliot.

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Frere's telegram was probably deliberately sensational to make sure that Argyll saw the telegram

(1) p.3.64 n.3 for comparison

(2) p.3.45 n.1

(3) p.3.26 n.1

(4) p.3.26 n.2

(5) NP, Northbrook - Wodehouse, 25.1.73

personally. A more restrained message might have been 'pigeon-holed', as Schneider's telegram of 3rd January was (1). But no official could afford to ignore Frere's telegram, in case later events justified Frere's warning. The Under Secretary at the India Office, Herman Merivale, knew Frere: he probably knew that Frere was given to sudden enthusiasms (2); and he took Frere's doom-laden warnings light-heartedly. Merivale suggested to E.~~S~~. Hammond, the Foreign Office Permanent Under Secretary, that he would '... know best ... the way of inducing the Turkish Authorities to abstain from starving our poor people at Aden in order to punish their own malcontents ...' (3). That implied some recognition of Ottoman suzerainty in the Yemen. The formal India Office covering note to the Foreign Office moreover reflected Argyll's view of the situation, wired from Scotland. It asked for '... representations needful to put a stop

(1) p.3.23 n.2

(2) R. Boswell Smith 'Life of Lord Lawrence', 2 Vols., London, 1883, II, p.432, for this contemporary assessment of Frere (hereafter Smith 'Lord Lawrence')

(3) FO 78 2753 D/O note, Merivale - Hammond, 6.1.73

to proceedings so injurious to Aden ...' (1).

An additional advantage in sending telegrams on a Saturday was that they probably arrived after the India Office and the Bombay Secretariat had closed. Argyll and Wodehouse received Frere's warning when they had no routine work to distract them from the Abdali crisis. Frere's telegram produced immediate action. Wodehouse sent an 'Operational Immediate' telegram to Northbrook at Calcutta on the same day (2). The Chief Secretary at Bombay also telegraphed to the Secretary of the Foreign Department about Schneider's still unanswered wire of 3 days before (2).

Wodehouse was not interested in the Persian Gulf and Arabia; and he had accepted that foreign policy there should be a matter for the Viceroy, and not for the Governor of Bombay as in the past. But Wodehouse did recognise the new strategic value of Aden as the British Naval Base for war-time control of the approaches to, or from, the Red Sea and the Suez Canal (3). In that

(1) IOL, Sec. Misc. Book L/P & S/3/104, Vol 97, TPN U/Sec IO - U/Sec FO, 6.1.73

(2) LI Encls - G of I Despatch - S of S of 10.1.73

(3) IOL, NP, Wodehouse - Northbrook, 20.1.73

assessment he was possibly influenced by Frere's letter to him from Aden (1). Wodehouse accepted Frere's assessment of the Yemen situation. He proposed that he should instruct the Resident to "... inform Musheer that operations against Lahej will be regarded as unfriendly to ourselves ...!" (2).

Northbrook was responsible for any action taken; and his orders were more cautious. The Resident was "... to address Pasha at once calling upon him to suspend all demonstrations or action against Chiefs and Tribes around Aden with whom we have political relations, pending instructions from his Government ...' (3). Northbrook believed that his "... message ... was as near a declaration of war in case Ahmad Mukhtar proceeded to interfere with Lahej as he felt justified in making ..." (4). Northbrook copied these instructions to Argyll with a further five explanatory paragraphs, by cypher telegram (5).

(1) p.3.22 n.3

(2) LI, Encl, G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

(3) IOL, LI, Encl, G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

(4) IOL, N, P, Northbrook - Wodehouse, 25.1.73

(5) IOL, LI, Viceroy's tel of 6.1.73 - S of S, rec'd 7.1.73

Northbrook amplified his views in a mail despatch of 10th January, received in London on the 27th (1).

Northbrook considered that the Ottomans should not '... interfere with those Chiefs with whom we have so long held direct relations as independent powers ...' (2). It is possible that Aitchison and Northbrook envisaged the Yemeni chiefs as a breakwater between the British in Aden and the Ottomans. But the Yemeni tribes, which Northbrook described as 'independent powers', could not be compared with the '... strong, friendly and independent States ...' (3) which Lord Mayo wanted as an intermediate zone between Russian and Indian territory. Northbrook's phrase 'independent powers' sounded more respectable than the reality. Possibly its inappropriateness was clear to India Office officials with experience of Yemeni affairs, but Argyll had already decided to support Northbrook before the despatch arrived. Northbrook had to state what he wanted, rather than to justify his

(1) IOL, LI, Encl, G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

(2) IOL, LI, Viceroy's tel of 6.1.73 - S of S, Rec'd 7.1.73

(3) Sir W.W. Hunter 'Earl of Mayo', Rulers of India series, Oxford, 1891, p.12 (Hereafter Hunter 'Mayo').

requirements.

Northbrook, in his written despatch of 10th. January, clearly envisaged the withdrawal of Ottoman suzerainty over the Haushabi tribe. But the Haushabi chief had recognised Ottoman suzerainty by December, 1872.

Northbrook enclosed a copy of the Resident's letter to Bombay of November, 1872 (1), which implied that the Haushabi submission was an unwilling one. It possibly was; but it is probable that the chief would have been unwilling to submit to British suzerainty. Schneider considered that the Haushabi's admission of Ottoman suzerainty could be reversed, once Schneider received Northbrook's message for Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha. Schneider wrote to the Haushabi chief on 8th January, remonstrating at the latter's visit to the Pasha. In reply, the chief professed a cautious willingness to be guided by the Resident (2).

It is probable that Northbrook was guided by

(1) IOL, LI, Encl G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

Res of 20.11.72 - SGB

(2) IOL, LA, Res - S of S, enclosing copies of Res - Haushabi, 8.1.73 and Haushabi - Res, 11.1.73

Aitchison as Secretary to the Foreign Department. He had a high regard for Aitchison; Aitchison was famous for the clearness and the directness of his notes (1). Possibly Northbrook decided to extend the area in dispute beyond the Abdali area because he accepted Aitchison's Minute. Aitchison had the advantage of having considered, and then rejected, a proposal to extend British territory by annexing Lahej in 1871 (2). It is possible that Aitchison believed in January, as he did in December, 1873, that British naval pressure could enforce Ottoman withdrawal from anywhere that Britain required in the neighbourhood of Aden (3). Northbrook envisaged Anglo-Ottoman negotiations. It was therefore sensible to demand a larger sphere of British 'influence' than the small, and indefinite, Abdali area, to give room for manoeuvre in negotiations. Northbrook was aware of Aden's inadequate defences, because he had read a recent report

(1) Sir W. Lawrence 'The India we served', London, 1928, p.78 (Hereafter Lawrence 'India').

(2) p.2.67 n.3

(3) IOL, NP, Aitchison - Northbrook, 30.12.73, copied to Argyll by Northbrook

on them, on his voyage to India (1).

Northbrook argued for a return to the Palmerstonian ban on Muhammad Ali's forces crossing the coastal range of hills and descending to the Gulf of Aden (2).

Schneider had suggested, in the previous October, that that policy should be applied (3). The policy was consistent with India Office objections to a Khedivial occupation of the Somali Coast (4), and with the Foreign Office's objections in 1871 to an Italian presence, at Socotra, in the Gulf of Aden (5).

Northbrook's telegram to Argyll on the Yemen situation was received on 7th January and passed to the Foreign Office on the 8th (6). By then, the Foreign Office had had Schneider's telegram of the 3rd and Frere's of the 5th for two days. Both telegrams had

(1) IOL, NP, Northbrook - Argyll, 29.7.72

(2) LI, G of I - S of S, 10.1.73

(3) p.3.12 n.2 above

(4) p.6.15 n.3

(5) p.5.3 - 5.4

(6) FO 78 2753, Viceroy - S of S, 6.1.73

mentioned only Lahej, although Schneider's telegram had referred to his letter of October, 1872, covering a wider area (1); but the India Office had not attached a copy of Schneider's earlier letter. It is therefore probable that Foreign Office thinking was dominated by the supposed need to keep the Ottomans out of Lahej only. It was still believed in March that that was all that was required (2).

A vague reference to other 'Arab Chiefs' was however made in the Foreign Office's telegraphed instructions to Elliot (3). It was probably inserted because of similar references in Northbrook's telegram. It proved sufficient to mislead the Foreign Department into assuming that Northbrook's requirement for a wider Ottoman abstention beyond Lahej had been accepted. The Indian Government therefore later assumed that Elliot had asked for, and that the Ottomans had accepted, such an abstention.

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(1) p.3.12 n.2 above

(2) p.3.53 n.5 below

(3) FO 78 2753, FO - Elliot, 11.1.73

Lord Granville sent his first instructions on the Yemen by a cypher telegram to Sir Henry Elliot on 11.1.73. It read; 'The Sultan of Lahej has expressed to the Resident at Aden great apprehension of a hostile movement against him on the part of the Turkish forces in that quarter. Any such movement would be viewed in a serious light by Her Majesty's Government as calculated to interfere with the British territory of Aden ... You will request the Porte to send immediate orders to its Authorities to suspend hostile operations in that quarter [implying Lahej] against any of the Arab Chiefs which ... [may] disturb the position we hold at Aden, [and] would certainly produce a bad impression in England no less than in India.' (1).

Granville had discussed the situation with Gladstone; and neither Minister apparently saw any cause for extending claims to British influence beyond Lahej to prevent an Ottoman occupation. Gladstone modified Granville's original draft to Elliot to emphasize that Aden was British 'territory' and not just under British

(1) p.3.32 n.3

'occupation'. He also substituted the request to 'refrain from' hostile operations by the more conciliatory 'suspend' implying a temporary action to be followed by negotiations (1). Elliot's private correspondence in 1872/73 with Hammond confirmed Ottoman goodwill toward Britain (2). It was therefore probable that the Ottomans would respect the British wishes not to advance against Lahej.

The Porte assured Elliot that '... no operations have been or will be commenced against the Lahej without orders from the Porte, which will do nothing without communicating with Her Majesty's Government ...' (3). But the Porte pointed out that Lahej was '... a part of the Yemen ...'; that '... that [Lahej] chief had [The attacked and plundered a neighbouring Chieftain, [that Haushabi] who recognised Sultan's authority, and [that his aggression ought not to pass unpunished ...'. The Ottoman reply to Elliot raised points which suggested that the Ottomans anticipated diplomatic discussions.

- (1) FO 78 2753, Note by Hammond of 11.1.73 on back of f 35
- (2) HP, PRO, FO 391/22
- (3) FO 73 2753, Elliot's wire to FO of 13.1.73

It was summarised at the Foreign Office as, 'No operations yet undertaken against Lash [sic] ' (1). Gladstone and Granville saw Elliot's despatch and made no comments; nor were there any comments in the India Office file.

On 21st January, Granville received Sir Bartle Frere's alarmist letters on the possible effects of Ottoman expansion on the British position at Aden (2). These letters reinforced the arguments already expressed by Badger against any Ottoman expansion in South Arabia (3). An internal F.O. Memorandum of 21st January summarised the position as it appeared to have developed since the 6th (4). Granville elaborated his earlier instructions to Elliot in a despatch of the 23rd (5). Elliot was to make clear to the Porte that Britain '... would view very seriously any proceedings calculated to disturb

(1) FO 78 2753, Summary on despatch cover

(2) p.3.22 n. 1

(3) p.3.16 n. 2

(4) FO 78 2753, Unsigned Memo initialled by Granville as 'seen'

(5) FO 78 2753 f 54-64, 23.1.73, FO - Elliot

the Country near Aden ... by Ottoman interference ... with rulers friendly to Great Britain ...'. Granville did not specify who those rulers were. He did not know, nor did the India Office, until May, after the Viceroy had listed them (1). Granville also sent Elliot a Memorandum (2) written in 1843, headed 'Yemen Instructions', with more recent comments sent by the India Office to the Foreign Office on 26.11.72 (3). But the Aden News Reports for 1873 show that Ottoman activities did not interrupt supplies to Aden (4).

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Argyll's Personal Attitude

Argyll's personal views in 1873 prejudiced him against any consideration for the Ottoman Empire, against

(1) p.3.56 n.5 below

(2) p.3.35 n.5 above

(3) FO 78 2753, including copy of Res Aden - SGB,
26.10.72, copied to IO

(4) AIA 621

any expansion of Ottoman territory, and against any action which might benefit the East African Slave Trade. Argyll had long held that '... no English Cabinet had the same duties as the Divan [the Porte] in respect of the "honour and independence" of a Mohomedan Empire ...' (1). He was not concerned to preserve the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, but only to prevent Russia gaining at Ottoman expense. He had '... no sympathy with the Turks as a people, or as a Government ...' in 1854 (2), and he gave no indication of any change of attitude in 1873. Certainly he would have welcomed an Ottoman collapse in May 1877 (3).

He was a sincere Presbyterian (4). He knew that Northbrook believed that Muslims in India had no affection

- (1) Argyll 'Autobiography & Memoirs', 2 Vols, London, 1906, Vol I, p.466 (Hereafter Argyll 'Autobiography')
- (2) Op.cit. I p.446
- (3) E. Ollier, Cassell's 'Illustrated History of the Russo-Turkish War', 2 Vols, London 1877-79, I, p.157
- (4) Argyll 'Autobiography' Vol. II, p.589

for their Christian rulers and that British power depended upon British bayonets (1). Argyll regarded Lord Mayo's assassination as part of a contemporary upsurge of religious fanaticism (2). As a Christian, he considered Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe to have been '... the chosen instrument of a Divine purpose ...' for the abolition of slavery (3). In 1872, he had written to Northbrook; '... the Queen's Government everywhere ought to do its best to help to suppress an iniquity so monstrous and so desolating ... as the East African Slave Trade has been now proved to be ...' (4).

Argyll's position within Gladstone's Cabinet was influential; he had 20 years of close political and social connections with Gladstone and with Granville (5). Granville considered that Argyll was closer to him than anyone but his brother (6). These relations were

(1) AM Reel 317, Northbrook - Argyll, 4.8.72

(2) IOL, NP, Argyll - Northbrook, 23.10.72

(3) Argyll 'Autobiography' II, p.57 written of her in 1856

(4) NP, Argyll - Northbrook, 12.10.72

(5) Argyll 'Autobiography' II, p.315 Argyll - Gladstone 29.6.74

(6) Argyll 'Autobiography' II, p.348 Granville - Argyll 5.4.80

important when 'the leading spirits' in the Cabinet decided '... a great deal by private and personal understandings ...' (1). Granville customarily discussed all foreign policy matters with Gladstone; and Northbrook, as an ex-member of the Government, knew how Argyll could press Granville and Gladstone. Argyll had the added advantage that he was prepared to press for an unpopular policy. Many of the 'extreme joints' of Gladstone's Government were too radical for Argyll's taste, and Argyll faced the prospect of leaving office without regret (2). He owed his political office partly to his influence in Scotland, as chief of the Campbells. In his own view, once he had reached decided opinions where great issues were at stake, Argyll urged his opinions with 'the eagerness of a strong conviction' (3). The Yemen crisis was such an issue.

Argyll had never sat in the House of Commons and that possibly explains why he believed that '... in an Empire such as ours, especially in the East, the executive

(1) Argyll 'Autobiography' I p.383

(2) N.P. Argyll - Northbrook, 13.2.74

(3) Argyll 'Autobiography' II p.4

power ought to have a strong weapon always in hand, and ought not to be hampered with the Parliamentary forms, which are necessary in European hostilities ...' (1). He believed that War was, at times, a necessary evil (2). Possibly for such reasons he was prepared for the Cabinet to authorize force in Lahej, without reference to the House of Commons. Any personal views that Argyll might have recorded in his Journal for 1873 are unknown. The Journals are not now listed amongst Inverary Castle Muniment Room records (3).

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Argyll had received Frere's letters on 20th January and had been impressed by Frere's forceful warnings. Frere had written; '... I do assure Your Grace that the position seems so hazardous ... energetic remonstrances should be ... sent to the Turks through Sir H. Elliot

(1) Argyll 'Autobiography' II p.65

(2) Ibid p.335 (in 1879)

(3) Writer's correspondence to, and phone conversation of 24.4.73 with, the present Duke of Argyll and the Chamberlain of Argyll

who should firmly insist on abstinence from all interference with the low country on this coast ...' (1). Frere may have been influenced by the inadequate state of Aden's defences, revealed in 1862, when he was Governor of Bombay (2).

Argyll urged Granville not to be satisfied with the bland Ottoman reassurances that '... these Tribes and Territories are already ours' (part of Yemen - a Province of Turkey) and we are only punishing some depredations made by one Chief upon another.'.

'Well - but if we admit this as satisfactory we are giving up all that Frere and others are contending for.

'We must not therefore accept without protest a reply which asserts the very dominion we object to and merely assures us that they are taking no new steps ...' (3).

(1) AM, Reel 318, Frere to Argyll, private 3.1.73, enclosing copies of letters to Elliot and to Granville, rec'd 20.1.73

(2) p.10.3 n.1

(3) FO 78 2753, Argyll, from Inverary, to Granville, 25.1.73, rec'd 27.1.73 in FO

Argyll was back at the India Office soon after January 27th when the Viceroy's despatch on the Yemen situation was received (1). Argyll also received a private letter from Northbrook (2). Both the despatch and the letter insisted that an Ottoman advance must be prevented, although Northbrook accepted that Anglo-Ottoman negotiations were a matter of Imperial, not of Indian Government, policy. In Northbrook's view, he was not justified in doing more than instructing that the Resident at Aden should warn the Ottoman Governor-General to halt his advance, while the two Governments arranged diplomatic discussions. Northbrook expressed his confidence to Argyll that the Ottomans would not dare to attack Lahej in the meantime. Northbrook did not then share the Resident's suspicion about Ottoman moves. Indeed, he expressed some doubts about General Schneider's competence, because Schneider had requested the better Snider rifles for Aden's garrison, although the Indian troops were untrained in their use, because Ottoman troops had breech-loading rifles (2).

(1) LI, Despatch of 10.1.73 sent via Brindisi

(2) NP LXXXV No 41 of 10.1.73

Argyll persuaded Granville that the British position had not been made sufficiently clear. Another despatch was therefore sent to Elliot on the 30th (1). It read; '... Her Majesty's Government wish that the independence of the [undefined] native chiefs in the vicinity of Aden should be respected, and that any attempt to subvert their authority would not be viewed with indifference ...'(1). It seems unlikely that the India Office and the Foreign Department did not realize that the Abdali Haushabi feud was a probable reason for the Haushabi chief accepting Ottoman suzerainty (2). The details were available explaining that feud, but the India Office did not forward them to the Foreign Office until January, 1874 (3). From this time, throughout the crisis, the India Office was selective in the material it passed to the Foreign Office. Argyll was concerned to support, not to control, the

- (1) FO 78 2753, Cypher despatch, FO - Elliot, 30.1.73,
seen before despatch by Argyll, Gladstone & the Queen
- (2) p.2.27 - 2.34
- (3) FO 78 2754, IO - FO, 12.1.74, forwarding Res - S of S,
1.2.73

demands of the Government of India, against the general moderation and caution of the rather disinterested Foreign Office. If the Haushabi area was accepted as being under the Ottomans, then the Alawi and Amiri areas to the north would also remain Ottoman.

The Resident's earlier description of '... the Chieftains of the Principalities [sic] bordering on Aden ...' was misleading for officials who did not know the area (1). Most Yemeni chiefs were elected leaders liable to be deposed if they proved unacceptable to their tribe. Rivalry within a chiefly family was not uncommon. So the British objection to '... any attempt to subvert ...' a chief's authority was likely to lead to Anglo-Ottoman friction (2). This was particularly so when the Abdali chiefly family were divided over the right of Fadhl bin Mohsin to be chief; when the Haushabi chief had a justified grievance against his Abdali neighbours; and when the Haushabi chief sympathized with Abdullah bin Mohsin's claim to the Abdali chiefship. Argyll's determination not to admit of any Ottoman right

(1) FO 78 2753 f 124, Res - SGB, copied to S of S, 26.10.72

(2) p. 3.43 n. 1

to discuss the Haushabi complaint against the Abdalis was a barrier to Anglo-Ottoman discussions and therefore to mutual understanding.

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Khalil Pasha had called on Elliot on 3rd February to tell the Ambassador that the Council of Ministers '... had decided that he [Khalil] should attempt to obtain the acquiescence of Her Majesty's Government to the Chief of Lahej making a purely nominal submission to the Sultan without tribute or service being required from him ...' (1). Elliot assured Khalil Pasha '... that there was no possibility of the idea being entertained ...'. Elliot was probably influenced by Frere's letter to him from Aden in rejecting these tentative Ottoman approaches for a negotiated settlement of differences (2). Probably Elliot's obdurate refusal to consider the not unreasonable Ottoman claims to Lahej, and the reasonable compromise proposed, suggested to the Porte that it would

(1) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 3.2.73

(2) p. 3.22 n. 1

be impossible to negotiate with the British. But Elliot still himself accepted, in a private letter to Hammond on 9th February, that a diplomatic agreement with the Porte over the Yemenicoastal tribes was probably necessary and obtainable (1). Granville did not query Elliot's rejection of the tentative Ottoman approach for a negotiated settlement. He probably assumed that the Lahej dispute was settled. Elliot thought so too.

Elliot misjudged the Ottoman dilemma. He wrote; '... it is evident ... that the Porte is most desirous of avoiding all action calculated to give umbrage to Her Majesty's Government, but it is embarrassed to find a satisfactory mode of retreating from the position produced ... by the threatening proceedings of the Pasha of Senna [Sanaa] ...' (2). Elliot's mistake was in not recognising that the Porte approved of Ahmad Mukhtar's attitude towards the tribes of southern Yemen (3).

There was no difference of opinion between the Porte and its Governor General. Elliot was possibly influenced by

(1) HP, Elliot - Hammond, 9.2.73

(2) FO 2753, Elliot - FO, 3.2.73

(3) FO 78 2753 f 226, Rashid Pasha - Elliot, 15.7.73

Frere's charge that Ahmad Mukhtar's call for Abdali submission was aggressive and unacceptable (1). Elliot used Frere's letter as a basis for a Memorandum on the situation which he delivered to the Porte, after Granville had approved its issue on 15th February (2). Elliot even disregarded his own earlier report that '... Lahej ... is regarded by the Porte as forming a part of the territory of the Yemen ...', which the Ottomans were reoccupying (3). The Porte's claim to Lahej was unchanged at the year's end. Lahej was '... une territoire que nous n'avons jamais entendu abandonner ... à une Puissance Étrangere ...' (4). In the Ottoman view, the British had no claims to local suzerainty by virtue of their small annual payments to local chiefs (5). In that the Ottomans were correct; those payments were a

(1) FO 78 2753, Frere - Elliot, 2.1.73

(2) FO 78 2753, FO - Elliot, 15.2.73

(3) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 13.1.73

(4) FO 78 2754 f 38-39, Tel despatch, Ottoman Foreign Ministry - Ottoman Ambassador, London, Dec 1873

(5) p. 3.80 n. 1

Danegeld taken over from the Abdali chief in 1839 (1). As Elliot, and Granville, understood the situation, Indian concern was limited to the vague area of the coastal plain of which Lahej was the market centre.

Elliot had stated that an Ottoman withdrawal of the claim to Lahej '... might be regarded as a recognition of weakness, injurious to the Sultan's authority in the districts now acknowledging it ...' (2). Schneider expressed similar views late in December, 1873 (3). In reality, even a British administration in Lahej was less harmful to the Ottoman position in the Yemen than a continuation of Abdali independence. So long as Lahej and other areas were independent, they provided a refuge for Yemeni opponents of the Ottomans and unsupervised access to the sea, and to contraband trade in arms and other goods.

Elliot claimed, on 12th February, that the Porte's dilemma had been solved by Mr. Pisani, the British Embassy

(1) AFI, Cmdr. Haines letter - Captain Willoughby, 7.3.39

(2) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 13.1.73

(3) FO 78 2753, Res - S of S, 8.12.73, forwarded

IO - FO, 12.1.74

Dragoman (1). Pisani suggested, at an interview with Khalil Pasha, the Ottoman Foreign Minister, that it was Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha who had claimed Lahej as a part of the Yemen, and not the Porte. That explanation '... disengaged the Porte ... from the responsibility of the Pasha's initiative ...'. Khalil Pasha neither accepted nor rejected Pisani's formula for saving the Porte's face, while obtaining a repudiation of the earlier Ottoman claim to Lahej, which Frere and Indian officials wanted. According to Pisani's report, interpreted in the light of later developments, Khalil Pasha courteously avoided committing himself. But, at the time, Pisani interpreted the Pasha's reply as accepting the suggestion that Ahmad Mukhtar had acted on his own initiative. In reality the Porte approved the Pasha's actions; but Pisani wrote; '... Khalil Pasha expressed thanks for [Elliot's] ... explanations, and repeated anew that the question of Lahej may be considered as accepted in the sense wished for by Her Majesty's Government ...'. India Office and Indian officials interpreted that

- (1) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 12.2.73, forwarding
Pisani's Report - Elliot of 11.2.73

statement as meaning Ottoman absention from the wider area that they had asked for: and it later became the basis for unjustified British charges of bad faith by the Ottomans.

The Porte tried to end discussions on the Yemen by informing the British Embassy that; '... Vizirial orders, founded upon an Imperial Rescript, have been forwarded to the Governor General of Yemen to abstain from interfering with the Ruler of Lahej, and directing him to leave matters in their former position ...' (1). That repeated the Ottoman assurance of non-intervention in Lahej affairs, which the British had originally requested. It envisaged an impossible return to the 'status quo ante' 1873 in south Yemen, where the Ottoman occupation had changed Yemen's politics. The Porte possibly thought that that reply was less damaging to Ottoman prestige than any renunciation of Ottoman claims. Elliot's despatch was passed to Gladstone and the Queen, and was seen by senior Foreign Office ^{staff} ~~officials~~ (2).

(1) FO 78 2753, Locock, Chargé d'Affaires Constantinople - FO, 14.2.73 by cypher wire

(2) Lords Enfield, Tenterden and Granville

A copy of the confirmatory letter was passed later to Argyll, who maintained his tough line. He '... hoped that Sir Henry Elliot may be instructed, in future discussions on this question with the Ottoman Ministers, firmly to maintain the position already taken up ...' (1).

Granville accepted Argyll's request (2).

The British had no legal justification for preventing a friendly Power occupying and administering all the Yemen. Northbrook admitted to Frere in June that British agreements with the tribes did not 'justify' military action in the Yemen against the Ottomans (3). Frere indeed recognised in 1874 that comparable British agreements with the Somali tribes did not justify British opposition to a Khedivial occupation of the Somali Coast (4). Yet Elliot had cavalierly rejected moderate Ottoman proposals for Lahej in February (5). Granville's

(1) FO 78 2753 U/S IO - U/S FO, 5.3.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Undated order on the IO letter by Granville

(3) NP, Northbrook - Frere, 9.6.73

(4) p.6.17 n.3

(5) p.3.45 n.1 above

disinterest, Argyll's partisan support of the Indian Government's demands, and Elliot's acceptance of Frere's unofficial arguments established British opposition to any further Ottoman advance. But as recently as October 1872, the Resident had accepted the possibility of any of the Yemeni Chiefs transferring '... their adherence to another Power ...' than Britain (1). Frere contributed to the creation of an 'instant crisis' out of an issue that had been raised seven months earlier. Subsequently, his interventions with Argyll helped to maintain tension. Yet the need for a negotiated settlement was realised by Elliot (2) and by Northbrook (3); and a compromise settlement was probably obtainable without sacrificing Indian strategic interests near Aden or Ottoman prestige in the Yemen. But Granville expressed no wish for formal negotiations, possibly because of the Liberal Government's weak domestic position (4). At the conclave of Gladstone's leading Ministers on 17th March,

(1) p. 3.12 n. 2 above

(2) p. 3.46 n. 1

(3) p. 3.42 n. 2

(4) Gr.P., Granville - Elliot, 20.8.73

the Aden situation was not mentioned (1).

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Argyll was impressed by the Indian case for a wider sphere of influence than Lahej; he now received a Hadhrami visitor's report of an interview with Ahmad Mukhtar in Sanaa and of Ottoman plans to occupy all of the Yemen and Hadhramaut (2); and the Indian case, that Ottoman assurances over Lahej were inadequate, was underlined in the India Office file (3). Argyll tried to persuade Granville by sending him the despatch (4). Hammond questioned the justification of this sweeping new proposal (5). Granville shared Hammond's doubts.

(1) BM, GP, Vol DLVI, p.76

(2) p.4.37 n.1 (Res - SGB 16.1.73) enclosed with (3)
below

(3) IOL L/P & S/5 Vol 14, G of I - S of S, 14.2.73,
rec'd 11.3.73

(4) FO 78 2753, G of I - S of S, 14.2.73, rec'd and passed
by U/S IO - U/S FO, 28.3.73

(5) FO 78 2753 U/S IO - U/S FO, Note by Hammond of 16/3

But Argyll was strengthened in his convictions by another alarmist letter from Frere, received on 19th March via Zanzibar (1).

Frere urged that the matter was '... one of vital importance, and calling for immediate action ...'. In his copy of a much longer letter to Granville, Frere emphasized vividly the danger to the British position in India of '... the re-establishment of a Khalifate over Arabia, even in the person of an Osmanli Sultan [which] would be an object of religious enthusiasm; and such be it remembered is the grounds of the claims which the Turks are putting forward to be the rightful sovereigns over the whole of Arabia; and if of Arabia, then of the entire Muslim world...', including India. That was a subject which Frere possibly knew (2) worried Argyll (3).

(1) IOL L/P & S/3/83, Frere - Argyll, with copies of correspondence - Granville, of 10.1.73 written

(2) L/P & S/3/104, Vol 97, U/S IO - U/S FO, 9.8.73, Argyll on Ottomans in Nejd and Lahej and the Muslim disturbances in Kashgar and Yunnah. Argyll referred to his earlier concern

(3) p.3.38 n.2

In Argyll's view, Muslim fanaticism, outside the Indian Army, had been aroused by the events of the Indian Mutiny (1). Frere went on to warn of the impetus to the slave trade that might be expected from an extension of Ottoman flag-cover to south Arabian vessels, immune to R.N. searches. In addition, since the opening of the Suez Canal, steamers flying the Ottoman flag had appeared in the Gulf of Aden, and they, too, might carry slaves. A report had been received from the Greek Consular Agent at Suakin that Egyptian steamers collected '... 40 - 50 slaves every fortnight ...' (2). Frere was given a copy. Probably Frere selected those arguments which he felt would most impress Argyll. Argyll had a high opinion of Frere (3); but he also realised that Frere could, at times, indulge his theories too freely (4).

(1) Argyll Autobiography II, p.91

(2) AIA 619, S.G. Lazary - Res, postmarked 30.9.72

(3) Argyll Autobiography II, p.78 referred to Frere as
'... one of the most distinguished of the ...
administrators ... of the Indian Empire ...'

(4) GrP, Argyll - Granville, 12.11.69 on a Memo of Frere's
of 8.11.69

Argyll received another despatch from India, kept it two days himself (1), and then sent it 'for information and return' to Granville on 28th March (2). Three letters of the Resident about affairs in Haushabi country were also sent in original. Granville returned the papers on 4th April, unconverted (3). He required '... some clear proofs ... before making any stronger remonstrations to the Porte ...'. Argyll sent the Foreign Office a copy of his subsequent wire to Northbrook asking for a justification for a British Protectorate and for details of the tribes covered (4).

Northbrook replied by mail on April 11th, and his reply was copied to Granville on 12th May (5). Argyll supported Northbrook's case. For the first time the tribes which the Indian Government wished to protect were named. They were:- '... 1. The Abdalee (Lahej)(6);

(1) IOL 2/1/P of S/3/4 Vol 83 with Argyll 26-27.3.73

(2) FO 78 2753, U/S IO - U/S FO of 28.3.73

(3) FO 78 2753, Note on back of correspondence

(4) FO 78 2753, S of S - G of I, 5.4.73

(5) FO 78 2753, G of I despatch of 11.4.73, rec'd early May

(6) Received stipends or customary payments

2. Foodhlee (1); 3. The Akrabee (1); 4. The Howshebee (1); 5. The Alowee (1); 6. The Ameer [Amiri] (1); 7. The Soobahee (2); 8. The Jaffae [Yafai]; 9. The Owlakee [Aulaqi] ...'. Northbrook referred the India Office to the 7th Volume of Aitchison's First Edition of Treaties for details of existing agreements (3).

The Abdali, Fadhli and Aqrabi tribes occupied the coastal areas from which Aden drew the bulk of its supplies. In addition, a small part of Yafai territory, in the Abyan delta, some Subaihi territory, west of the Abdali and Aqrabi territory, as well as the south eastern part of Haushabi territory, with the village of Haroor, were in the coastal plain. The bulk of the Haushabi and Yafai territory was not. Nor was any of the Alawi, or of the isolated Amiri areas. The coastal plain in the Aulaqi area, east of Fadhli territory, did not provide Aden with supplies. Most Aulaqis lived in the interior. There was

(1) Received stipends or customary payments

(2) Some sections of this divided tribe received stipends

(3) p.3.56 n.5

no effective British influence outside the Abdali, Fadhli and Aqrabi areas. The Abdali chief had, however, some influence with his nearest Subaihi neighbours, the Rijai. The British had nominal connections, through their agreements, with the Mansuri, Makhdumi and Rijai and some/^{other}sections of the Subaihis.

Northbrook's despatch asserted '... that, while the Chiefs have been independent of Turkey, they have not been so of the British Government, which, for some years past, has paid them stipends, and has frequently interfered to settle their inter-tribal quarrels ...'. Yet the British had proved unable to prevent inter-tribal feuding. Northbrook claimed that the tribes looked '... on the Resident of Aden as their friend and adviser in all their difficulties. The question is somewhat a domestic one ...'. It is plain that the Indian authorities, echoing views which Schneider had expressed in October, 1872 (1), were giving a biased assessment. But there were few facts upon which the Home Government could judge; and some were a matter of opinion. The Viceroy claimed

(1) p.3.12 n.2

that the Chiefs were, and had been for a century, independent of Ottoman influence and control. But the Atifi section of the Subaihis had claimed to be under Ottoman control in 1871 (1). The Haushabi chief had accepted Ottoman suzerainty by December, 1872. However, the Governor General and his Council had been '... of opinion that any Ottoman attempt to bring [sic] the ... Haushabi under subjection was equally objectionable to similar action taken in regard to Lahej ...' (2).

The main Indian Government argument was that the British already had Treaty relations with these nine chiefs and so could make new agreements '... if deemed "expedient" ...'. It was stressed that existing engagements had been made '... without reference to Turkey or any other Foreign Power ...'. Rather more bluntly, the argument continued that, as '... to the question of the rights of the British Government as against the Chiefs themselves, we would observe that ... we

(1) p.2.53 n.3

(2) FO 78 2753, G of I despatch - S of S, 21.3.73,
passed to FO, 26.4.73

consider ourselves free to impose any measures upon the Chiefs which we may deem essential for the safety of our Aden possession ...' (1). The Indian Government demanded the very right which it denied to the Porte to protect the Ottoman position in the Yemen.

An emotional argument was that '... the proceedings of Turkish officials have been so prejudicial to British interests at Aden as to afford good grounds for such arrangements being concluded with the Chiefs as may be deemed best fitted to prevent a repetition of the evils ...'. That charge was unfounded. Similar arguments were used again, with no more justification, in 1902 by the British Boundary Commissioners to justify demanding Ottoman territorial concessions (2). The Aden Weekly News Reports from January to late March, referred to the 'tranquil' condition of the districts in the neighbourhood of Aden (3). Apart from the imposition of a new 5% 'ad valorem' duty imposed on goods going to

(1) LI, G of I despatch of 11.4.73 - S of S, para 4

(2) 9.60 n.1 and 9.70 n.2

(3) AIA 621, Reports of 31.1.73 - 8.2.73 and 14.3.73 - 27.3.73

Aden from the Yemen interior, as against $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ to be levied on goods going to Mocha from the interior, there was nothing mentioned that was 'prejudicial' to British interests at Aden. Even that tax was light, if the Ottomans increased security on the caravan routes. The British had themselves encouraged the Abdali chief in 1865 to institute a transit tax to pay for his expenses in protecting caravans from Fadhli raids.

Northbrook pointed out that the Abdali chief had asked for British protection. But, quite incorrectly, it was claimed that he was '... the chief of the largest and most important tribe ...'. No reference was made to the Indian Foreign Department's earlier objection to annexing Abdali territory, because that might cause a dispute with the Porte over Ottoman claims on the Abdali's undefined borders (1). Nor did the Indian Government explain how it would control the tribes if they were protected. It merely said that the tribes would be required to abstain from political intercourse with Foreign Powers, without the consent of the British Government, and

(1) p.2.67 n.3

to refer all disputes with Foreign Powers, or with each other, to the British Government for settlement ...'. The British Government would then '... engage to defend them against unprovoked aggression by Foreign Powers ...'. 'Foreign' was not defined, but it probably applied to non-Arabian Powers.

When Northbrook and his Council drafted their Despatch, they had received a copy of Granville's important policy Despatch to Elliot, No 19 of 30.1.73 (1). They also understood that Khalil Pasha, the Ottoman Foreign Minister, had reassured Elliot that the Porte would make no fresh advances and that the Ottoman Commander had been directed '... to leave matters in their former position ...' (2). Those undefined assurances 'satisfied' Northbrook and his Council because they were believed to apply to all the stipendary chiefs, and not to Lahej alone, in answer to Indian demands. The Ottoman assurances therefore caused misunderstandings in India, and so, later, in London. Consideration of the conflicting

(1) p.3.43 n.1

(2) p.3.50 n.1 above

Indian Government and Ottoman interests in the southern Yemen required time and a calm atmosphere. Circumstances dictated that both should be denied, even before the Indian Government proposals were sent to the Foreign Office.

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On 5th May, the Resident telegraphed to India that Ottoman intervention in the Haushabi area was continuing (1). For his part, the Resident had warned the Haushabi chief to cease co-operation with the Ottomans and to secure the withdrawal of Ottoman troops, unless he wished to have his stipend cut and have other, unspecified, action taken against him (2). The Haushabi chief's reply was rude but realistic; he suggested that Schneider ask the Ottomans to withdraw their troops, instead of asking that of the Haushabis; he warned that the main caravan route would be closed if Schneider stopped paying the Haushabi stipend; and, in that case, the Haushabi chief invited

- (1) FO 78 2753, IO - FO, 12.5.73 passing G of I tel - IO of 10.5.73 quoting Resident
- (2) FO 78 2753, Res - Haushabi chief, 12.5.73 copied to FO by IO, 17.6.73

Schneider to hunt him through the Haushabi hills, if he could (1). Schneider complained to the Secretary of State that such disrespect for British prestige depended upon Ottoman support for the Haushabi chief (2). Once that was removed Schneider was satisfied that the 'petty and contemptible' Haushabis would be brought to their senses. Schneider assumed that Haushabi wishes were irrelevant and that the tribe was a British dependent. Schneider's reports were also sent to the Foreign Department through Bombay.

Frere visited Aden on 19th May; in his opinion, Ottoman interference with the tribes near Aden was increasing. He favoured assisting the local tribesmen to expel the Ottoman troops and reinforcing Aden's garrison, if diplomatic notes failed to secure an Ottoman withdrawal (3). There is no evidence that the tribesmen wanted to, or could have, expelled the Ottomans. Frere advised Northbrook on the 19th to 'stir up' the Foreign Office (3). Possibly he gave Schneider similar advice.

(1) FO 78 2753, Haushabi Chief - Res, back of f 220

(2) FO 78 2753 f 225(back), Res - S of S, 26.5.73, para 8.

(3) NP, Frere - Northbrook, 19.5.73

From Aden, Schneider began to send frequent telegraphic reports of Ottoman movements, or rumoured movements, southwards towards Lahej. His first report was of the arrival of 12 Ottoman soldiers, 'billeted' - so Schneider telegraphed - in the Haushabi Sultan's house at Shuqa (1). The Haushabi chief had asked for Ottoman support against Abdali pressure, so Schneider's use of the emotive word 'billeted' was misleading. Shuqa was a sensitive border area where Haushabi territory had been ceded to the Abdalis (2). When the message was passed to the Foreign Office, the word 'Lahadj' was added after 'Shuqa' in the summary on the Foreign Office file cover (3). The report thus apparently referred to an Ottoman intrusion into Abdali territory. Granville accepted that interpretation; he also agreed with Argyll's demand for an immediate Ottoman withdrawal; Elliot was instructed on the 22nd to press the Porte for that (4).. This British misunderstanding

(1) L/P & S/3/104 Vol 97, Tel. G of I - IO, 21.5.73,
repeating news from Aden

(2) p.2.28-2.30 and 3.73

(3) FO 78 2753, IO - FO, 22.5.73

(4) FO 78 2753, Tel. FO - MBMA C'ple, 22.5.73

was incorporated in the official record of events (1). It appeared that the Porte had broken the undertaking of mid January not to begin operations against Lahej (2).

Northbrook believed that the Ottomans were guilty of bad faith by sending troops into the Haushabi area, to Shuqa. Northbrook therefore instructed Schneider by telegram to protest to Ahmad Mukhtar that '... in sending troops to Housibee country he is acting contrary to assurances given by the Ottoman Porte ... and will be answerable for the consequences ...' (3). The Resident duly wrote to the Pasha, accusing him of bad faith (4). Schneider and his staff were enduring the humid heat of an Aden summer. Now they suffered from a false sense of grievance against the Ottomans in the Yemen as well. More disturbing news of Ottoman moves followed. The Resident telegraphed on the 27th that the Haushabi chief

(1) BM, SPR, PD 1874, C920 published January 1874

(2) p.3.34 n.3

(3) LI, Viceroy's wire of 23.5.73 - S of S, reporting instructions sent through Bombay

(4) FO 78 2753 f 224, Copy of Res - Pasha c. 23.5.73

was trying to persuade Abdali tribal leaders, including the Chief's elder brother, Abdullah, to accept Ottoman suzerainty (1). On the 29th, Schneider reported a proposed Ottoman flag march from Hajariya through Haushabi territory and up to Qataba (2). Schneider described that alarmingly as '... a reconnaissance in the neighbourhood of Aden ...'. He accordingly asked for, but was refused, authority to station troops in Lahej (2). Meantime, Elliot felt that '... the Turks were making fools of themselves about the Arab tribes ...' near Aden; but that that '... was not from want of plain speaking ...' by him (3).

Elliot had described Foreign Minister Khalil Pasha, in April, as '... an errant old woman, who cannot take a decision and goes on shilly-shallying ...' (4). But Khalil Pasha had some justification for indecision; his

(1) FO 78 2753, Res - IO, tel. 27.5.73

(2) FO 78 2753 f 191

(3) HP, Elliot - Hammond, 30.5.73

(4) HP, Elliot - Hammond, 13.4.73

position depended upon the whim of the Sultan; and neither Elliot nor the Pasha had adequate maps of the area. However, on 1st June, Elliot telegraphed to London that the Porte accepted the British demands to withdraw Ottoman troops from the Haushabi Sultan's house within nine days (1). But the Porte required that this acceptance should be considered, temporarily, as private; and certain, unspecified, Ottoman rights were reserved.

Argyll received Frere's alarmist letter written from Aden on 19th May on 2nd June (2). Frere had suggested military measures, if diplomacy failed to secure an Ottoman withdrawal from the territory of the stipendiary tribes. He justified military action by the strategic need to recognise the increasing value of Aden because of the growth of traffic through the Suez Canal. That was an indirect recognition that the British claims on the Porte were based on British convenience, not on legal right. Northbrook had already emphasized to Argyll in February that Indian concern was for all the stipendiary

(1) FO 78 2753

(2) AM Reel 317 with a copy of Frere - Northbrook,
19.5.73 (p.3.64 n.3)

chiefs and not with the Abdali alone (1). That was reinforced by the Indian Despatch passed to the Foreign Office on 12th May, calling for Protectorate treaties with all the stipendiaries, so that Britain would have a legal justification for defending them from the Ottomans (2). Frere would have learnt on his return to Aden from Zanzibar, how Indian demands had escalated beyond Frere's originally more moderate aims. He would also have learnt from Schneider of the Ottoman's intentions to occupy the Haushabi area.

Frere sent Argyll a copy of his letter to Northbrook of 19th May; that exaggerated the dangers to the British position. Frere claimed that British agreements with the stipendiary tribes were '... not for general political objects, but to keep open roads and enable our garrison to be fed ...'. Unjustifiably, he implied that Ottoman control would endanger those supplies. But in his January letter to Elliot, copied to Argyll, he had accepted

(1) LI, Despatch No 22 of 14.2.73, rec'd 11.3.73, para 5

(2) L/P & S/3/104, U/S IO - U/S FO forwarding Despatch No 38 of 11.4.73

that '... their [Ottoman] authority may be an excellent exchange for a chronic state of intertribal feuds, elsewhere ...' than on the coastal plain (1). Now he criticised an Ottoman export duty of $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ on supplies going to Aden. That was a small price to pay for security in the interior. But Frere described "protectionist" Ottoman taxes as intended '... to divert trade from Aden to ... Mocha and Hodeida ...' (2).

Frere referred to the Haushabi grievance against the Abdalis for taking land at Zaida and warned wildly that the Haushabi chief '... is now threatening Lahej [with Ottoman support] and preparing to recover land formerly taken from him by Lahej ...' (1). That charge was never substantiated. The Abdali chief probably believed it; but the Ottomans showed no sign of provoking an Abdali-Haushabi clash, although the Ottomans did recognise the Haushabi claim against the Abdalis (3). So did Schneider (4).

(1) p. 3.20 n. 1

(2) NP, Frere - Northbrook, 19.5.73

(3) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 13.1.73

(4) FO 78 2753, Res - S of S, 3.12.73, para 4, passed to FO 12.1.74

Frere went on to warn of the probability of fresh anti-British religious feeling in India, if the exiled Moplah leader from India, Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi, was given a leading role in local affairs by Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha. Evidently, Schneider had told Frere about the Pasha's alleged plans to employ Seiyid Fadhl (1). Argyll had also received a copy of Schneider's letter about the interview from the Government of India in March. Argyll had had some correspondence from India warning him of the latent religious conflict between Christianity and Islam in India that could erupt (2). He suspected that '... Mahomedan ill-feeling ... cannot be conciliated ...' (3). Northbrook was more open-minded; many British officials assured him that Lord Mayo's assassin was regarded as a martyr, but he had no means of knowing whether that was so (4). Argyll was possibly impressed; the India Office enquired whether Muslim actions in Yunnan, Kashgar, Nejd, and Lahej were part of a common plan (5). The Foreign Office

(1) p.4.37 n.1

(2) AM Reel 318, Sir William Muir - Argyll, 18.12.71

(3) NP, Argyll - Northbrook, 23.10.72

(4) NP, Northbrook - Argyll, 26.9.72

(5) FO 78 2753, IO - FO, 9.8.73

issued a circular to its Consular Officers in Muslim countries enquiring if they had any such evidence.

There was no aggression by the Porte on the Haushabi tribe; Ottoman soldiers went to Shuqa to protect Haushabi interests; but the India Office, on Argyll's instructions, copied an Indian telegram of 23rd May to the Foreign Office, '... relative to the aggressions on the Haushabi tribe of the Turkish authorities in the Yemen (1) on 3rd June. Granville was asked that Elliot should make 'effectual' representations to the Porte to stop this 'aggression'. Elliot was so instructed (2). But the Porte's new Governor General had left for Hodeida on 5th June, with instructions '... to cause immediate withdrawal of troops [from the Haushabi Sultan's house at arRaha, not from Shuqa (3)] and to abstain from molesting any of the [British stipendiary] tribes ...' (4). Elliot's telegram caused further misunderstandings, and later British charges of Ottoman bad faith. Elliot's ill

(1) FO 78 2753 f 201

(2) FO 78 2753, tel. FO - Elliot, 5.6.73

(3) Only subsequently apparent, and unknown to Elliot when he telegraphed

(4) FO 78 2753, tel. Elliot - FO, 6.6.73, rec'd 7.6.73

health, possibly due to the strain of seeing Anglo-Ottoman understanding deteriorate, may have contributed to his failure as an intermediary. He complained of tiredness (1).

The Ottomans were not 'molesting' the Haushabis; they had not undertaken to withdraw from Shuqa; and an Ottoman withdrawal from arRaha, from the Sultan's old home, did not imply an Ottoman evacuation of Haushabi territory. The Ottoman assurances to Elliot were, therefore, honoured. But, because the British understood them as referring to an evacuation of all the territory, including the Haushabi chief's tower at Shuqa, on the sensitive Lahej border near Zaida, a continued Ottoman presence at Shuqa was held to be an Ottoman breach of faith. The confusion was caused because the British demand, sent to Elliot on 15th May, was virtually a new demand (2). It was later recognised as being the definitive statement of the British position (3). The British right

(1) HP, Elliot - Hammond, 27.6.73

(2) FO 78 2753, FO Despatch III - Elliot, seen by Gladstone

(3) FO 78 5098, Viceroy's tel. of 28.12.99 - S of S

to declare a Protectorate inland rested upon the Ottoman failure to reject this demand openly. In it, Granville extended his instructions to Elliot of 11th March (1), then '... specifically applying to the Sultan of Lahej ...', to such '... native Arab tribes ... as were in friendship with the British Government ...' (2). This sudden extension of British demands, and the urgency with which they were repeated (3), probably caused confusion and consternation at the Porte. The Foreign Office had called for the withdrawal of Ottoman troops; they were withdrawn; but the Ottoman gendarmes remained in Haushabi territory at Shuqa. The letter, but not the spirit, of the British telegraphic demand had been met.

Granville's new instructions accepted the Indian Government's case that all the stipendiary chiefs should be protected (4). Not surprisingly, the Porte reserved its rights, and its comments, for a later date. But, in

(1) FO 78 2753

(2) p.3.73 n. 2

(3) p.3.65 n. 4

(4) LI, Despatch No 38 of 11.4.73

an age when great weight was attached to keeping promises, Ottoman behaviour now came, wrongly, to be portrayed as deliberately deceitful and dishonourable. Elliot believed that the Ottomans had agreed on a general withdrawal (1); so did the Foreign Office (2); so did Northbrook (3). But Northbrook believed that negotiations would be required in London and Constantinople to arrange matters; and he told Elliot so (3). In Aden, Schneider noted Ottoman advances in Hajariya towards the Subaihi tribe, whom he chose to consider as British stipendiaries, throughout June (4). He was also aware that the Ottomans remained at Shuqa.

On 17th June the India Office sent copies of earlier correspondence about Ottoman advances towards Aden to the Foreign Office. Some of it had been sent before; and there was no great concern at the Foreign Office. Granville believed that '... the question would seem by

- (1) NP, Elliot - Northbrook, 6.8.73
- (2) FO 78 2753, Comment by Granville on the cover of f 208, U/S IO - U/S FO, 17.6.73
- (3) NP, Northbrook - Elliot, 9.6.73
- (4) AIA 621, News Reports, 5 - 17 June 1873

Elliot's report [to be] settled ...' (1). But Schneider had made an emotional issue out of his exchanges with the Haushabi chief, and out of his assurances to the Abdali chief, that the Ottomans would withdraw, being proved to be untrue (2). '... The position of the British Government at Aden will be unbearable if any petty and contemptible chief [the Haushabi] ... can set its authority and wishes at defiance by making his submission to the Ottoman Porte ...' (2).

The new Foreign Minister, Rashid Pasha, tried to reassure Elliot on 15th July of Ottoman goodwill towards the British at Aden, while reserving Ottoman suzerainty over '... les tribus aux environs d'Aden Ces peuplades trouvent un débouché avantageux et lucratif de leurs denrées sur les marchés d'Aden, et notre ferme intention n'est point certes de troubler un état des choses aussi satisfaisants ...' (3). Rashid understandably professed himself at a loss to understand how the British had charged the Ottomans with bad faith over the still

(1) p.3.75 n.2

(2) FO 78 2753 f 224, Res - S of S, 26.5.73

(3) FO 78 2753 f 226, Ottoman Note Verbale

unexplained incident of the Haushabi Sultan. Rashid commented tartly on the surprising British preoccupations with the administration and troop movements within the Ottoman Province of Yemen. Considering the way in which British demands had escalated the Ottoman note was conciliatory. It emphasised that the Porte and its officers in the Yemen were following precisely the same policy. That statement, alone, should have, but did not, put an end to British theories that difficulties were due to Ottoman officers in the Yemen deliberately disregarding the Porte's instructions. Instead, some British opinion came to explain divergences between what the British wanted, and what the Ottomans did, by saying that the Porte gave different instructions to its officers to the assurances which it gave to Elliot (1). Rashid Pasha emphasised that traditional Ottoman policy towards Britain had not changed.

Schneider complained on 30th July that the Ottoman detachment remained at Shuqa; their number had risen to 30, but they were described as 'Irregulars' (2). Elliot

(1) p.3.81 n.1

(2) FO 78 2753 f 259, Tel. Res - S of S

was sent a copy of the Resident's telegram (1). But Schneider complained again; he had received a letter from the Mutasarif of Taiz complaining of Subaihi cattle raids against the Haushabis (2) Such Subaihi action might have been encouraged by the Abdali chief to provoke a clash, and to provoke an anti-Haushabi and anti-Ottoman British reaction (3). But the Resident considered a warning letter from Ahmad Ayub Pasha to the Abdali Sultan far more serious. The Pasha warned the Abdali that no '... Government will relinquish the rights that revert to its sovereignty and that it guards and protects he who has already tendered his submission ...' [i.e. the Haushabi] . The Resident implied that the Pasha criticised the Abdali for not yet tendering his submission, unlike the Haushabi. There is, however, no Arabic copy in the India or Foreign Office file; and the Residency's translations were sometimes inaccurate.

(1) FO 78 2753, FO - Elliot, 8.8.73

(2) FO 78 2753 f 276, Copy Res - S of S enclosing a copy of Mutasarif's letter

(3) Cf. p.2.52 - 2.53

The Resident wrote to the Pasha demanding that he should evacuate Haushabi country '... in conformity with the orders you have received ...' from the Porte (1). Schneider was not conciliatory; but his personal honour had been repeatedly involved in assurances, later discredited by Ottoman action, to the Abdali chief; and the weather was 'hot and trying' (2). He had believed that Ahmad Ayub had replaced Ahmad Mukhtar at Sanaa because the latter had disobeyed the Porte's orders not to interfere with the Haushabi and other British stipendiaries (3). At Bombay Sir Philip Wodehouse found '... the conduct of the Turkish officers ... certainly most strange ...'; Wodehouse wanted to '... show ourselves amongst our allies in the interior ...' (4). Northbrook however refused Schneider permission to send troops to Lahej.

- (1) FO 78 2753, Copy Res - Ahmad Ayub, 19.8.73 enclosed with Res - S of S, 21.8.73, passed to FO, 6.9.73
- (2) AIA 621, Aden News, 18-25.6.73
- (3) LI, Despatch No 68 of 11/8, rec'd 8.9.73. Northbrook instructed Schneider to inform the local chiefs so.
- (4) NP, Wodehouse - Northbrook, 1.9.73

Ahmad Ayub had reported on British claims in the Yemen to the Porte through the War Minister on 6.8.73 (1). He recognised, correctly, that the British paid small stipends to various, unnamed, chiefs. He claimed that the Subaihis came under the Ottoman Districts of Mocha, for the coastal sections, and, of Hajariya for the inland ones. Only two small nomadic sections, which had refused Ottoman suzerainty, were excluded (2). These two may have been the Makhdumi and Mansouri sections, which had British stipendiary agreements from 1871, and which were under Abdali influence at times. Frere stated that the Ottomans controlled the settled Rijai section to the West of Lahej (3). The Pasha described the Haushabis as being tranquil and well governed under their Ottoman Mudir, the Haushabi chief. Ahmad Ayub blamed unrest on the Abdali Haushabi border on the Abdalis. He considered that the latter should obey

- (1) FO 78 2753 f 333 - 336, Trans. of report of Ahmad Ayub received confidentially by British Embassy through its dragoman, Mr. Pisani, and enclosed with Pisani's report of 29.10.73 - Elliot
- (2) Cf. p. 2.54 - 2.55
- (3) NP, Frere - Northbrook, 19.5.73

the law of the land, if they wished to work their fields at Zaida. The Pasha also reported the application of the Abdali chief's elder brother, Abdullah, through his son, Fadhl, for Ottoman nationality and protection. Their application was submitted to the Porte and the petitioners were told that the Ottoman decision would be '... in conformity with the Imperial Commands ...' of the Sultan.

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Ahmad Ayub replied to Schneider in a letter of 30th September, received on 9th October, rejecting the Resident's claim that the Haushabi area was not Ottoman territory. Schneider complained indignantly to Argyll, sending the Pasha's letter in original; '... The impression created in my mind', Schneider wrote, 'by the persistent disregard of orders by the past and present Moosheer is that the Ottoman Porte gives assurances to H.M's Govt which its subordinates are instructed to ignore ...' (1). Schneider also telegraphed to the India

(1) FO 78 2753 f 359, Res 59 of 11.10.73 - S of S

Office news of the Pasha's refusal (1). Schneider's telegram arrived when feelings at the India Office were already in favour of more resolute action. Northbrook had written to Sir Henry Rawlinson in a letter of 8.9.73; '... the best way out ... will be to make treaties ...' with all the stipendiaries (2). That would make the British position clear by establishing a Protectorate. The probability, confirmed by Haushabi ties with the Ottomans over the next 40 years, that the Haushabi chief would not have made a treaty voluntarily with Britain, was overlooked.

Argyll had received a letter from Northbrook of 15.9.73 which had explained that there were '... no signs of withdrawal of Turkish detachment from the Howshebee country ...' (3). Northbrook pressed Argyll privately, as he had publicly, to obtain Government

(1) FO 78 2753 f 289, Res Tel. of 10.10.73 - S of S

(2) NP. Rawlinson was Chairman of the Political Committee at the India Office

(3) NP

approval for Protectorate Treaties (1). Argyll officially reminded the Foreign Office about the India Government's earlier '... proposal to take certain chiefs in the vicinity of Aden under British protection ...' when passing on the correspondence on Yemen affairs (2). Privately, Argyll urged Granville; '... we must keep Aden and keep it in perfect security and peace ...' (3). Aden was as important for the trade beyond India as for India itself. Argyll proposed to Granville that Protectorate treaties should be authorised.

Lord Tenterden had just taken over as Permanent Under Secretary from the elderly Mr. Hammond (4). Tenterden,

- (1) LI, G of I Despatch No 68 of 11.8.73 realistically stressed the importance of Protectorate Treaties for the Abdali and Fadhli areas only
- (2) FO 78 2753, IO - FO, 13.10.73
- (3) GP, Argyll - Granville, 13.10.73
- (4) Granville's views on Hammond were given to Queen Victoria on 7.10.73 - Letters of Queen Victoria, ed. G.E. Buckle, Murray, London, 1926, Vol II, p.286, second series.

a more competent official, commented sharply; "This is a very serious matter. If we protect these tribes we must see to their gd. behaviour and sooner or later shall probably have to govern them altogether and annexe them. I presume you will consult Mr. Gladstone before deciding.'(1). Granville added a short minute to a brief summary of the background prepared for Gladstone's benefit. Granville suggested '... another representation to the Porte, telling them that such a measure has been proposed, but before taking it into consideration we think it right to make another representation to them of the absolute necessity of their bona fide carrying out their assurance ...' (2). Gladstone 'entirely concur [red]' and went on to stress the necessity of avoiding an unjust war by such hastiness as had caused the Ashanti War (3).. Gladstone made no private comment on the Yemen to Granville when returning the Memorandum. Gladstone was then preoccupied with Home Affairs. Argyll accepted that

(1) FO 78 2753, Tenterden - Granville, back of f 298C dated 14.10.73

(2) FO 78 2753 f 298, undated, Granville - Gladstone

(3) FO 78 2753 f 309, Gladstone, 17.10.73 - Granville

Protectorate treaties would limit British freedom of action, but saw no other way of protecting Aden (1). Granville informed Argyll that Gladstone agreed to a final attempt to preserve the 'status quo' by obtaining an Ottoman withdrawal from the Haushabi area through Elliot (2). But events were moving too fast for calm discussions in London or Constantinople.

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The Abdali chief mistrusted the approach of his brothers, Abdullah and Abdul Karim, to the Ottomans (3). Their action threatened his own authority. As the Resident could not actively assist Fadhl bin Mohsin against his brothers, Fadhl stopped his brothers' share of tribal revenue. Northbrook had refused to give Schneider 'discretionary power' and had resisted pressure for troop movements (4). The Resident approved Fadhl's action.

(1) Gr.P. Argyll, in an undated note

(2) FO 78 2753, Granville - Argyll, 19.10.73

(3) p.3.81 . .

(4) NP, Northbrook - Elliot, 9.6.73

The brothers retaliated by collecting funds directly from the market. Fighting followed in which Abdullah bin Mohsin's side lost two men killed. Local mediation restored an uneasy peace in Lahej. Two of the Abdali chief's dissident nephews were surrendered to him as hostages (1).

Fadh1 bin Mohsin appealed to Schneider for support and received 400lbs of gunpowder and shot of various calibre (2). This supply of gunpowder alarmed Abdullah bin Mohsin who owned a strong, fortified house in Lahej town, which the chief had been unable to seize (1). As thick mud walls could resist cannon shot, gunpowder was used locally to blow up such buildings. Abdullah then appealed to the Mutasarif in Taiz for protection, as an Ottoman subject. In the Civil Governor's absence from Taiz, the military commander ordered troops to go to Lahej from Shuqa. He did not know that Ottoman troops were not allowed to enter Abdali territory. Once the troops were in Lahej, Schneider's protest was referred from Taiz to Ahmad Ayub Pasha at Sanaa (3).

(1) FO 78 2753, tel. Res - IO, 20.10.73

(2) FO 78 2753 f 368, Res - SGB (r) S of S, 20.10.73

(3) FO 78 2753 f 442, Res - S of S, 28.10.73

Northbrook authorised Schneider to use troops to protect the Abdali chief, when the Resident reported the Ottoman refusal to withdraw on the 22nd (1). The Resident despatched his Second Assistant, Captain Hunter, with fifty sabres of the Aden Troop, to Lahej on the 23rd, and an Anglo-Ottoman confrontation had begun. On the 27th, the Resident provocatively moved the 328 strong Aden garrison 'Lahej Field Force' out to Lahej (2). Despite rising tension at Simla and at London deliberate calm still prevailed at Lahej. The Ottoman officer courteously visited Captain Hunter on the 25th and showed his concern to avoid hostilities (3). The country remained quite tranquil (4). Supplies for the interior for Aden remained plentiful. Schneider, in telegraphing to India and to London about the Ottoman troops entry into Lahej, omitted all mention of his earlier provocative despatch of gunpowder (5).

(1) FO 78 2753 f 317, Viceroy's tel. - Argyll of 23.10.73

(2) FO 78 2753 f 343, Res tel. - S of S of 27.10.73

(3) p.3.86 n.3

(4) AIA 621, Aden News No 44 of 24-31.10.73

(5) p.3.86 n.2

This news appeared, in London, to be another Ottoman provocation. The Resident had described the Ottomans troops' officer asking the chief for hostages, and a senior Ottoman officer asking for the surrender of the Abdali tower at Zaida. But the Resident did admit that the Ottoman detachment denied any hostile intent; and he had advised the Abdali chief not to attack the Ottomans. Typically, the India Office did not pass the Indian Government Despatch, which set out some of the background (provided earlier by the Resident (1)) to the squabbles between the Abdali chief and his elder brother, to the Foreign Office, until after the Foreign Office had ordered Elliot to protest to the Porte against the Ottoman failure to honour their assurances not to enter Lahej (2). Argyll considered '... matters ... getting serious ...'. In his view an Anglo-Ottoman military clash was possible (3). But Granville remained

(1) FO 78 2753 f 341, Res 227 of 26.8.73 - SGB

(2) FO 78 2753, FO - Elliot, 25.10.73

(3) Gr.P., Argyll - Granville, 29.10.73

calm; he believed that the Porte might procrastinate, but that it had no intention of opposing Britain (1). He sent Argyll a copy of his telegram to Elliot of 25th October.

Granville's opinion was justified by Ahmad Ayub's quick, conciliatory, reactions. The latter despatched an Officer, Izzet Mustapha Bey, to Lahej at the end of October. Ayub Pasha wanted to arrange an Abdali reconciliation and to obtain an Ottoman withdrawal with the minimum Ottoman loss of face. Izzet Bey reached Lahej on 15th November (2). But Schneider was looking for an end to the crisis on his own terms; he required the unconditional departure of the Ottoman troops. He wanted to injure Ottoman prestige, as he felt that British (and therefore his own) prestige had been injured recently. British prestige would then rise locally. Schneider, in his later written report, felt obliged to pay tribute to Izzet Bey's remarkable courtesy in a difficult position.(2). However, at the time, Schneider

(1) Gr.P., Granville - Argyll, 31.10.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Res 71 of 24.11.73 - S of S with a report on Izzet Bey's visit to Lahej

telegraphed provocatively to Argyll that he saw '... nothing but discreditable subterfuge and evasion in conduct of Turkish authorities and he trusted that there was a limit to the forbearance of the British Government ...' (1). Schneider also acted provocatively; he travelled the length of Abdali territory up to the Haushabi border at Zaida before returning to Aden on 30.10.73. The whole area was calm. At Lahej both the Ottoman Mulazim and Abdullah bin Mohsin tried to negotiate a settlement with the Abdali chief. But Schneider warned Fadhl bin Mohsin not to negotiate with either (2).

The Resident maintained tension in London and at Calcutta by reporting rumours of small Ottoman reinforcements moving to Lahej and to Shuqa (3). Subsequent correspondence suggests that such 'reinforcements' were possibly only messengers. The Resident even sent telegraphic reminders that the Ottoman were not withdrawing from Lahej or from Shuqa, when he had nothing

(1) FO 78 2753, Tel. Res - IO of 18.11.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Res - SGB copied to S of S, 12.11.73
f 553-554

(3) FO 78 2753 f 350, Res tel. of 3.11.73 - S of S

more provocative to report (1). The India Office remained opposed to Granville's moderation, with a comment by Argyll that '... the position of affairs is most unsatisfactory and that if the Govt of the Sultan cannot be persuaded by diplomacy to adhere to the promises so frequently made ... more active measures should be taken to enforce their withdrawal ...' (2).

The Resident's telegrams to India brought Northbrook an offer of naval support from the British C in C, Indian Ocean (3). Northbrook considered one ship was sufficient. Much was subsequently made of the stay of a modern Ottoman corvette, the 'Libnan', in Aden at this time. The 'Libnan' was carrying troops; and its presence was later alleged to have been '... a demonstration in favour of the Ottoman detachment near Aden ...' and a naval threat to the British position at Aden (4). There

(1) FO 78 2753 f 371, Res tel. of 8.11.73 - S of S

(2) FO 78 2753, U/S IO - U/S FO on FO draft of 12.11.73

(3) NP, Northbrook to Wodehouse, 10.11.73, referred to the naval offer

(4) Hunter 'Aden' p.169

is no evidence for either charge. Ramadhan began in mid-November, 1873, and that, combined with a shortage of Ottoman credit, was sufficient to delay the 'Libnan' in Aden waiting for coal. Certainly the factual contemporary News Report did not refer to the delay as a demonstration (1). Indeed, tension in Lahej was low and the Resident knew that. He visited Lahej from 7th - 10th November and described the Ottoman Mulazim as being '... heartily tired of his position ...' (2). There was no evidence of any tension at Lahej. But at the India Office, Rawlinson wrote to Northbrook; '... The Arabian affair is troubling us very much ...' (3). While Northbrook wrote to Granville from Calcutta; '... I hope he [Elliot] will arrange the Aden affair ...' (4).

At the Foreign Office, Tenterden, correctly, assessed the local background in a Minute; '... The Houshebee Sultan and the Lahejd rebel uncle [sic elder brother]

- (1) AIA 621, Aden News No 47 of 15-20.11.73
- (2) FO 78 2753 f 553, Res - S of S of 12.11.73
- (3) NP, Rawlinson, 14.11.73 - Northbrook
- (4) NP, Northbrook - Granville, 14.11.73

have tendered their submission to the Governor General of Yemen to secure his assistance. The result being that the chief town [sic] of the Houshebee has been occupied by Turkish troops ...' (1). Tenterden went on, mistakenly, to blame Ahmad Ayub Pasha, '... an ambitious man, urged by fanaticism (and perhaps stimulated by the expectation of its being well received by the Porte) to extend the Turkish dominions over all the Arab tribes whom he could reach ...'. Tenterden, misinformed by Elliot, had not realised that the Ottoman troops were not motivated by different sentiments to the Porte's (2).

Argyll received a private letter from Northbrook on 16.11.75 complaining that '... the conduct of the Turks has become worse and worse ... The deliberate neglect by the Turkish officials of the assurances given to Sir H. Elliott ... seemed to me to justify so much of interference [as sending troops to Lahej] ...' (3).

(1) FO 78 2753, Tenterden on 14.11.73 to Granville

(2) p.3.67 n.3 and p.3.77

(3) NP, Northbrook - Argyll, 23.10.73

'I should have liked to go further and eject the Turks from Lahej ... but in the absence of orders in reply to our references ... I did not think that we were justified in doing more without instructions. I hope we may soon receive power to act vigorously or our position at Aden may become severely compromised ...'.

Northbrook's last remark justified Gladstone's and Granville's reluctance to have Protectorate treaties. Had Northbrook been permitted to make one with Lahej he would, he implied, have used force against the Ottomans. But even Argyll, while pressing the Indian Government's case in London, did not encourage Northbrook to provoke a clash with Ottoman troops. In replying to Northbrook, Argyll made no mention of Aden affairs (1). He wrote about the succession in Afghanistan. However, Argyll then knew that Elliot had received assurances from the Porte on 15.11 for '... the immediate evacuation of Houshebee country and [that] they engage that these orders shall be executed ...' (2). But Elliot's next

(1) NP, Argyll - Northbrook, 19.11.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Elliot's tel. of 15.11.73 - FO, rec'd
16.11.73

telegram introduced an element of doubt (1). It confirmed the despatch of orders '... to withdraw troops from Howshabee and any other part of Lahej to which they may have been sent ...'. The Haushabi area was not a part of the Abdali territory of Lahej. Clearly there was some Ottoman confusion, but the Porte had no direct telegraphic communication with Sanaa. The Grand Vizier had, earlier, instructed Ahmad Ayub to withdraw troops, as Elliot understood, from both Abdali and Haushabi territory (2). But Elliot was mistaken; the Grand Vizier only referred to withdrawing troops from any part of Lahej, and not from the Haushabi area.

Elliot's wire relieved the tension in London for ten days while the India Office waited for Ottoman orders to be received at Lahej and Shuqa. It was then the Porte's turn to express anxiety at the British occupation of Lahej (3). The Porte admitted that a junior Ottoman

(1) FO 78 2753, Elliot's tel. of 16.11.73 - FO, rec'd 17.11.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Elliot's letter No 426 of 18.11.73 enclosed a copy of Grand Vizier's telegram of 3/15 November 1973

(3) FO 78 2753, Ottoman telegraphic despatch presented by Musurus Pasha - Granville on 26.11.73

commander had made a mistake; but it urged that there was no need for a British presence at Lahej. Granville was inclined to agree, subject to Argyll's assent (1). But Argyll withheld that. He could '... not undertake to issue any instructions which tend to embarrass the Political Resident at Aden or the Government of India in the exercise of their discretion as to the best means of maintaining the influence of the British Government with the Chiefs in the neighbourhood of Aden ...' (2). The Foreign Office too had second thoughts and queried (3) whether the Ottoman telegraphic despatch given to Granville on 26.11.73 (4) guaranteed an Ottoman withdrawal from all the nine tribes. Elliot gave Rashid Pasha's confirmation on 1.12.73 that it did, thereby conceding for the first time what Northbrook had wanted since January (5).

(1) FO 78 2753, Granville - Argyll, 27.11.73

(2) FO 78 2753, Confidential D/O Kaye - Tenterden, 28.11.73

(3) FO 78 2753, FO tel. of 28.11.73 - Elliot

(4) p.3.95 n.3

(5) FO 78 2753, Elliot tel. of 1.12.73 - FO

On 2nd December, Schneider revived tension in London by reporting that the Ottomans had not withdrawn from either Lahej or Shuqa, and that the Haushabi chief was cultivating Abdali lands under Ottoman protection (1). The Resident reported (1) rumoured (2) Ottoman troop movements south from Taiz with light pack artillery. He suggested that reinforcements should be kept ready for Aden. Granville was satisfied with Elliot's reassurances(3) but India Office officials were more impressed by the Resident's rumours. Argyll described the Yemen situation as '... intolerable ...' (4). 'The Turks [were] playing with us and our Forces would be said to be afraid of them if we stood still. The Resident should be authorised to repel the Turks by force and Argyll expected to hear that... Northbrook had taken that course!..(5). That alarmed

- (1) FO 78 2753 f 456, Res tel. of 2.12.73 - S of S
- (2) Possibly the Abdali Chief was providing Schneider with rumours to maintain tension so that the Haushabi, and the Ottomans at Shuqa, were forced to withdraw
- (3) FO 78 2753, Elliot - FO, 2.12.73 wired further reassurances
- (4) FO 78 2753, U/S IO - U/S FO, 2.12.73 expressed Argyll's view
- (5) NP, In Northbrook's letter to Argyll, 23.10.73, rec'd 16.11. Northbrook wrote that he would have liked to eject the Ottomans

Granville, who wrote to Argyll on the 4th (1), after consulting Gladstone (2), that if Argyll thought that Northbrook would order force, they wished Argyll to instruct the Resident not to do so '... without the consent of the Home Govt ...'. Granville correctly believed that sufficient time must be allowed for the Governor General of Yemen to receive, and to act on, the Porte's orders. The Porte had no telegraphic link with Sanaa (3).

Granville was unmoved (4) by a private Memorandum to him from Frere (5), advocating naval pressure against the Ottomans at Hodeida if British demands were not met. Frere's intervention is an interesting illustration of the combined efforts of Frere and Kaye, and also Rawlinson,

(1) Gr.P.

(2) Gr.P., Granville - Gladstone, 3.12.73

(3) FO 78 2753, Elliot tel. - Granville of 5.12.73
pointed that out

(4) FO 78 2753, Undated Minute by Granville

(5) FO 78 2753 f 486-489, Memo by Frere

to apply pressure wherever they thought it might be effective. Frere wrote on Athenaeum Club paper, of which he and Kaye were both members. Possibly the two men may have discussed the Resident's telegram of 2.12.73 and the Yemen situation there. They were certainly exerting as much pressure for action on Argyll, and on India Office policy, as they could, just as serving officers had pressed Northbrook in India to authorize force (1).

Rawlinson, writing to Northbrook on 5th December, doubted if the Turkish troops would be '... withdrawn within the limits that we have prescribed unless we show our teeth in earnest ...' (2). But Rawlinson did give qualified credit to Argyll's 'good and strong' letter on the Yemen to Granville of 2.12.73 (3). He however regretted that Argyll only felt that the time had 'almost' come to use force. In Rawlinson's opinion that time had arrived earlier.

- (1) NP, Northbrook - Sir Henry Rawlinson, 8.9.73 referred to pressure for a military solution
- (2) NP, Rawlinson - Northbrook. Central Asian affairs were mentioned in Rawlinson's correspondence with Northbrook more than the Yemen
- (3) L/P & S/3/104, U/S IO - U/S FO, 2.12.73

On December 6th, the Ottomans withdrew from Lahej, and from Shuqa (1). Their withdrawal marked the beginning of a new phase of Abdali and British expansion at Haushabi and Ottoman expense. Schneider was not authorised to campaign within Haushabi territory, but he marched the Lahej Field Force up to the border. When the Haushabi chief failed to make his expected submission to Schneider after evacuating Shuqa, the Resident allowed the Abdali chief to occupy further Haushabi territory up to Al Anad. Once the Haushabi elders made peace with the Abdali chief, Schneider withdrew the Lahej Field Force; its support was no longer necessary for the Abdalis. But Schneider left the Aden Troop to patrol in the previously disputed area. Complacently, Schneider remarked that 'heavy punishment' had 'overtaken' the Haushabi chief, who was a refugee living in the hills (2).

In Lahej, Abdullah bin Mohsin and his principal supporters had been taken into Aden as 'state prisoners'.

(1) FO 78 2753, U/S IO forwarded Res tel.s of 6.12 and 7.12 - FO on 9.12.

(2) FO 78 2753 f 600, Res tel. of 20.12.73 - S of S

Abdullah's fortified house was blown up. These were calculated moves by Schneider to hurt local Ottoman prestige. Elliot reported the Ottoman Minister of War's annoyance at these '... encroachments upon the Ottoman possessions ...' (1). A later official protest followed early in 1874 (2); '... Le Resident Anglais se trouve avoir fait acte d'autorité sur une territoire que nous n'avons jamais entendu abandonner a une Puissance Étrangère ...'. In Ottoman opinion, the agreement between the two Governments to maintain the 'status quo' had been broken. So Elliot's assurance to the Porte, that Britain '... n'entendait en aucune façon élever des prétentions de possession sur Lehadj, mais qu'il avait simplement en vue de sauvegarder ses Conventions avec certains Cheikhs ...', had proved false. Elliot admitted that '... even those who are friendly to us have been a little startled at hearing that the Housebee [sic Abdali] Sultan's brother had been taken as a prisoner to Aden and his fortress blown up ...' (3). Elliot wrongly explained the troubles

(1) FO 78 2753, Elliot's letter 461 of 15.12.73 - FO

(2) FO 78 2754 f 38-39, Ottoman telegraphic dispatch

(3) NP, Elliot - Northbrook, 17.12.73

as being due to an expansionist policy pursued by the Ministers of War and Marine, in opposition to the Grand Vizier and the Foreign Minister who had worked for reconciliation with Britain.

Northbrook recognised the outcome as a 'diplomatic success' for Britain (1). He was now prepared to be conciliatory, although he still wanted Protectorate agreements with the tribes to prevent future misunderstandings with the Porte. The Resident was ordered to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between the Abdali chief and his brothers to reduce tension, and possibly because the Indian Government also did not want the Abdali dissidents as political prisoners in India (2).

The events in 1873 in southern Yemen were of interest to very few Britons, other than officials of the India Office or of the Indian Government. The subject was not an issue of inter-party controversy, because Lord Salisbury continued Argyll's support of Northbrook on Yemen affairs. There were no Parliamentary questions on the events of the

(1) NP, Northbrook - Rawlinson, 25.12.73

(2) AIA 643, Tel. SGB - Res, 27.12.73

Yemen (1). Such information as did appear was largely inaccurate (2). 'The Times' reported on 8th December that the Turks had evacuated Lahej. '... The country [was] clear of Turks between Lahej and Suez [sic Taiz] ...' (3).

Elliot wrote complacently on 6th January that '... that Lahej business is at an end ...' (4). Elliot considered that nothing could have been more satisfactory than the Sultan's language. Abdul Aziz was concerned only to protect Mecca and Medina; he did not want a crisis over the Yemen (5). But the importance of Sultan Abdul Aziz's expression of irritation at Ottoman commitments and expenses in the Yemen was marginal. Elliot had

(1) BM, SPR, PP 1873-74

(2) BM, Newspaper Room. 'The Times' of 26.10.73 reported 1,000 Turks threatening to occupy Lahej

(3) BM, Newspaper Room. The Times quoting their Calcutta correspondent

(4) GP, Elliot - Granville

(5) FO 78 2754, Cypher Tel. 4.1.74 - FO from Elliot reporting an interview with the Sultan on 3rd January

recognised (1) that discontent against the Sultan in Constantinople and in the Provinces was weakening the Ottoman Empire. Elliot was mistaken in believing that Anglo Ottoman differences in the Yemen were at an end. They were to continue until the Ottomans left. But no study was ever made into the causes of the conflict and so into ways of preventing its recurrence. No explanation was considered necessary. Elliot's view and Schneider's reports were accepted because the outcome was 'satisfactory'. The official, published narrative record of the confrontation retained the bias and the inaccuracies of the original reports from Aden and India (2). For the British, the events of 1873 were transferred into myths very early.

(1) Gr.P., Elliot - Granville, 28.11.72

(2) BM, SPR, PP 1874, Vol LXXVI, p.405, C 920

Section 4. The Aden Residency and Coastal Hadhramaut1865 - 1888

Hadhramaut was divided into Inner (الداخل), and Coastal (الشاطئ), Hadhramaut (1); many independent tribes lived there, with no central authority and no recognised suzerain. The Porte claimed suzerainty over all Arabia, and the Sultan, as Caliph, was prayed for in Shihr's main mosque on Fridays (2). Two principal tribal groups were in conflict: the Kathir, in central Inner Hadhramaut, and the Yafai, principally settled around alQatn, in the west of the Wadi Hadhramaut, and at Mukalla. The Yafais were descended from Yemeni mercenaries, whom the Kathir had employed whilst ruling Hadhramaut intermittently between the 16th and 18th centuries.

The Kathir had themselves emigrated to Hadhramaut from Dhufar during the 15th century (3). Some Kathir had remained in, and were the principal tribe of, Dhufar. In Hadhramaut, the Kathir described their

(1) Map A

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.28, note 2

(3) 'Colonial 123', p.27-28

confederation as the Shenafir Confederation, from the name of the leading Kathir section in Dhufar. The Kathir, Awamir, Jabir and Bajir tribes were the members of that Confederation; their territory stretched south from the borders of the Rub al-Khali desert to a point about 60 miles north of the Indian Ocean; and from near Shibam in the west to near Tarim in the east.

The Yafai had seized control of every major centre in Inner Hadhramaut, except Shibam, by the mid-19th century. Shibam was built on a strong defensive position, a rock outcrop, near the middle of the Wadi. It was in the main area of Kathiri settlement, and an important market centre for the surrounding bedouin tribes and settled cultivators. '... He who holds Shibam in fact holds the country ...' (1). However Shibam's revenue was apparently inadequate for its ruler's requirements; the Kathiri chief sold half of his town to the Yafais of alQatu (2). In 1830, the Kathiri chief tired of sharing Shibam and killed all the Yafais there when the majority

(1) Ingrams 'Arabia' p.188-189

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.29. No date is given

were away visiting relatives at alQatn (1). In the fighting which followed the more numerous Kathir had the advantage over the Yafai of alQatn, who appealed to one of their emigrés in Hyderabad Deccan, Umar bin Awadh alQuaiti.

Awadh had joined the Nizam's Arab Irregulars; he married, settled in Hyderabad, and finally acquired considerable wealth and influence as Commander of the Irregulars. The British Residency in Hyderabad credited him with an ambitious scheme to dethrone the Nizam and to reign himself (2). The scheme was frustrated by the jealousy of the other Arab Jemadars of the Irregulars who refused their co-operation. Umar sent men, money and three of his sons to assist his fellow tribesmen against the Kathir (1). The date of this involvement is not stated. It appears to have been about 1850, but local accounts were written from partisan

(1) Colonial 123 p.29-30

(2) AIA 789, First Asst Res, Hyderabad - SGB,

6.9.77

standpoints, supporting either the Kathir or the Quaiti, and they are in conflict (1). It is clear, however, that there was a broad alliance between the Kathir and the Seiyids of Hadhramaut, and their emigrés in the Hejaz, against the Yafai. Possibly it was represented to the Residency in Aden for factional advantage, as a struggle between a religious, pro-Ottoman, Kathiri faction, and a more secular, more tolerant, even pro-British Yafai group. The Quaiti leaders of the latter group were identified as supporters of the Nizam's pro-British Minister, Sir Salar Jung. During the Indian Mutiny, the loyalty of these Quaiti-led Arab Irregulars to Sir Salar was considered to have been decisive in keeping Hyderabad loyal to the British alliance (2). Power in Hyderabad was in Sir Salar's hands; the Nizam's Minister was 'a delegate of power - not an adviser' (3).

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(1) e.g. Note 1 Colonial 123 p.30

(2) G.B. Malleson 'History of the Indian Mutiny' Vol III
p.120, London 1880

(3) IOL, D 107, Note by Sir S.C. Bayley, page 6

Many South Arabians served as Irregular soldiers with the Nizam; some served other Indian rulers. The company commanders of these troops held the rank of 'Jemadar'. The Jemadars recruited the Irregulars to fill their Companies and were paid according to the nominal strengths of the contingents which they were required to provide for service when necessary. In practice, about a quarter of the contingent was normally available for duty (1). The remainder were either working elsewhere, and receiving a retaining fee, or were still to be enlisted from amongst the Arabs and half-Arabs living in the area. The Jemadars, and even the Commander of the Arab Irregulars, were also allowed private business interests. In the view of British officials at the Hyderabad Residency, the Irregulars did '... no real service but [cost a] very large proportion of the revenues of the state, while they [were] a permanent bar to the satisfactory settlement of the country ...' (2). Whether they were in Hyderabad, or abroad on their private

(1) AIA 726 Ag Res - SGB, 11.6.76

(2) AIA 789 First Asst Res, Hyderabad - SGB, 6.9.77

affairs, Jemadars in the Arab Irregulars might remain on the pay-roll. At least one Jemadar was usually in attendance on the Nizam's Minister, even when the latter travelled outside the state. Periodically, all the Jemadars in Hyderabad went into camp with the Nizam's Minister (1).

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The Kathiri leadership was divided between two groups; these were the Al Isa bin Badr Kathir in the Shibam area, whose chief was at feud with the Quaiti of alQatn; and the Al Abdullah bin Badr Kathir in the Tariba area. The more vigorous and lasting leadership developed in the latter group. One of their number, Ghalib bin Mohsin, emigrated and enlisted in the Nizam's Irregulars. He became a Jemadar and acquired wealth. He sent money home to his brother, Abdullah bin Mohsin. Abdullah used the money to buy two positions commanding the important, Yafai-occupied, town of Tarim (2). The

(1) AIA 726 Sir Salar Jung - Res, Hyderabad, 28.9.75

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.29

village of Ghuraf^f commanded the eastern trade route from Shihr where it entered the Wadi Hadhramaut. The fortress of Heid Qassim dominated the western approach to Tarim.

Abdullah enlisted a large number of Aulaqi mercenaries (1). With his mercenaries and his partial command of Tarim's approaches, Abdullah put pressure on the Yafai ruler of Tarim, bin Gherama, to sell him half the town. Subsequently, further fighting occurred. The local, Tamim, tribe supported bin Gherama and more Aulaqi mercenaries were brought in to strengthen Abdullah. In 1847, the Kathir overcame bin Gherama and occupied all his territory up to, and including, Saiun. Bin Gherama fled to Mukalla. There he was refused help by Naqib Salih bin Muhammad.

Abdullah, following his reoccupation of the country from Tarim to Saiun, made an alliance with the Seiyids of Hadhramaut in 1847, to restore peace to the country (2). Such an alliance was a threat to the Yafai in Hadhramaut.

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.29 says 2,000. The figure is possibly exaggerated

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.30, Note 1

In 1850, in support of the Kathir, Seiyid Ishaq bin Aqil bin Yahya led an expedition from Mecca, supplied by the Grand Sharif, to Burum, about 20 miles west of Mukalla (1). The expedition was intended to capture Shihr, but it came too late in the season for calm weather; and the Kasadi Naqib of Mukalla joined the Bureiki Naqib of Shihr in attacking the force after it disembarked in the shelter of Burum Bay. The invaders were defeated. In later British records the attack was inaccurately described as an Ottoman one.

In 1858, the Quaiti recovered half of Shibam by a negotiated agreement with its Kathiri chief, Mansour. Shortly afterwards, the Quaiti leader, Awadh bin Umar, invited the Kathiri leader to his house and murdered him. The Quaiti then killed all the Al Isa bin Badr Kathir whom they could find and assumed control of all Shibam.(2). Thenceforward, the Quaitis were opposed by the Al Abdullah bin Badr Kathir, led by Ghalib bin Mohsin in Hyderabad and by his brother, Abdullah, in

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.30, Note 1

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.30

Hadhramaut. Both sides depended upon Hyderabad for the money to finance their operations and to maintain their strength.

In 1866, a Kathiri force, said to have numbered 600 men, and to have been led by Ubud bin Salim, a relative of the Kathiri chief, besieged and captured the port of Shihr (1). The dispossessed ruler, Naqib Ali bin Naji alBureiki, was irresolute, elderly, and impecunious; possibly a shortage of money had earlier obliged him to sell his village of Hazm to Mohsin bin Abdullah al Aulaqi about 1861. He died in poverty as a refugee in Lahej in 1875 (2). It is possible that the Bureiki Naqib's faithful observance of his anti-slave trade agreement with the British of 1863 (3) contributed to his downfall. The loss of trade would have reduced his revenue from customs duty, alienated Shihri merchants and their customers involved in the

(1) LA(L/P & S/9 Vol 43) Res 23 of 2.11.66 - SGB(r) S of S

The Resident's information was not first hand. The numbers may be taken as an estimate

(2) FO 78 3615, Res - SGB, para 9, 3.6.79, passed by IO - FO, 10.9.81

(3) Note with Note 1, p.4.10

trade, and reduced opportunities for employment in Shihr. The port depended upon its trade and the local fishing industry for its livelihood. Shihr's loss had been Mukalla's gain, for the Kasadi Naqib observed his own anti-slave trade agreement (1) only in the breach (2). Locally, it was believed that a change of ruler ended Shihr's obligation to eschew the slave trade (2). That belief may have been an incentive to support a Kathiri occupation. The Kathiri attack was possibly suggested to the Kathiri leader by Seiyid Aqil bin Abdullah bin Yahya, who led the abortive raid on Burum in 1850 (3). It may also have been encouraged by Ghalib bin Mohsin's fellow Jemadar, Mohsin bin Abdullah alAulaqi. The period was an unsettled one, and conditions in the Hadhramaut possibly resembled those in the Yemen between 1864-1866. There, drought, cholera, cattle plague and locust swarms provoked such suffering and scarcity that inter-tribal

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' (1933 Edn) No LXVII

(2) LB, Res - SGB, 7.12.72, forwarded to S of S by B^o
Despatch No 8 of 1873, received 26.2.73

(3) p.4.8 n.1

fighting resulted. There is no official account of conditions because no Residency officials visited Hadhramaut between 1864 and 1872 (1).

Shihr lacked the strong natural defences of Mukalla and its ruler lacked tribal support. His ancestor had come from Hureidha in Wadi Amd, in western Hadhramaut, at the invitation of the Shihris, guided by Seiyids of the alAttas family, in 1752 (2). Since the Attas Seiyids themselves lived in Hureidha (3), their support for Shihr's new ruler was possibly based on enlightened self-interest. The Hadhramaut was then very disturbed. But once the Kathir and the Seiyids had agreed to work together against the Yafais in 1847, it is probable that the position of Naqib Ali in Shihr became more precarious. He was not a Yafai (4), but the Kathir and their Seiyid

(1) AIA 579 Report of Capt. W.F. Prideaux - Res, 2.12.72

(2) 'Colonial 123' p.30 Note 1

(3) 'Colonial 123' p.38

(4) The family belonged to the bin Bureik Mushaikh of the desert area near Shabwa, between Hadhramaut and the Yemen

allies required control of Shihr for operations against the Kasadi Naqib in Mukalla and the alQuaiti Yafai in Inner Hadhramaut.

The Aden Residency was ill-informed about Hadhramaut; in 1871, the Resident's Second Assistant, Captain W.F. Prideaux, described the Upper Yafai tribes as bordering '... upon the Province of Hadhramaut and ... often engaged in war with the Kaiti [sic Kathiri] tribe ...' (1). In fact, the distance between the western limits of Hadhramaut and the eastern border of Upper Yafai was over 200 miles. But the immigrant Upper Yafai tribesmen in Hadhramaut were at feud with the Kathir. The Residency had little contact with the Hadhramaut coast and none with the interior. The Resident had neither the staff, the means of communication, nor the authority for the regular contact necessary to maintain accurate information. Instead, the Residency depended upon Hadhramis established in Aden, and upon Hadhrami visitors, for local news. That method of securing information gave a bias towards the rulers of

(1) AIA 560 f 726 Report of August 1871 - Res

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Mukalla and Shihr, whose dhows visited Aden. By contrast, the Kathir had no coastal shipping and no regular Aden contact. It was probable, therefore, that distorted reports of the occupation of Shihr reached the Residency. Possibly the Kathir helped themselves to such food stocks as they found in Shihr, even as the Fadhli tribesmen looted vessels visiting the port of Shuqra in 1865, out of necessity and hunger (1). Since the Kasadi Naqib claimed that the Kathir attempted, but failed, to seize Mukalla in 1866, his reason for blackening the Kathir was plain. Another British informant was the refugee Bureiki Naqib who came to Aden via Mukalla, seeking British help.

The new Kathiri ruler of Shihr wrote a friendly letter to the Resident in November, 1866 (2). The Resident, Major W. Merewether, had not yet returned from leave and duty in Britain, so the Kathiri letter was received by Captain G.R. Goodfellow, officiating as Resident. Goodfellow did not acknowledge the letter.

(1) Cf. p.2.10 n.1

(2) LA (L/P & S/9 Vol 43), Off^g Res - SGB, copied to
S of S, of 4.12.66

He was excitable and impulsive, and, at the time, rather overworked. It is possible that Merewether, on his return, never saw Ghalib bin Mohsin's letter, before receiving from Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor of Bombay, a letter introducing Awadh bin Umar alQuaiti, the Kathir's opponent. Awadh sailed from Bombay early in 1867 to eject the Kathir from Shihr. On his arrival at Aden he was apparently given considerable material assistance by the Resident for his expedition against the Kathir.

It is possible that Frere and Merewether linked the Kathiri occupation of Shihr with the prospect of xenophic, religious support for the Kathir from Mecca. There were various Muslim religious leaders living in exile from India (1), and from elsewhere under European control, in Mecca. Frere was strongly opposed to Ottoman control of the south Arabian coast; possibly he feared that a Kathir occupation would lead to that. But the Kathiri leader's letter to the Resident was conciliatory, hoping for Anglo-Kathiri friendship.

(1) E.g. Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi, the Moplah, from the Malabar Coast. See p.5.14 n.1

Successive Residents at Aden were generally ready to suspect, and to resent, Ottoman ambitions in any change in the 'status quo' in south Arabia. The Kathiri occupation of Shihr was such a change. The Residency's suspicion of Ottoman aims was probably increased by an alleged attempt by an Ottoman naval commander to obtain local admissions of the Porte's suzerainty at Shihr and at Mukalla in 1867 (1). In view of Awadh bin Umar's proven ability to manipulate situations to his own advantage, and of his understanding of British Indian officials, it is possible that the report was an attempt by Awadh, by then ruling Shihr, to obtain more British support from Aden for his expedition inland against the Kathir. It is difficult to see why the Porte did not persevere later if the Ottomans were refused, and ~~did~~ wish to obtain, local recognition of their suzerainty. The British had accepted the prospect of an Ottoman occupation of Husn Ghorab, about 60 miles west of Mukalla, in 1870 (2). The Porte expected the British to accept an

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.31

(2) p.3.6 n. 1

Ottoman occupation of all the Yemen up to Aden in 1873 (1). There was no reason before 1873 why the Porte should have expected British opposition to any Ottoman naval demonstration on the Hadhramaut coast. But none was reported, although Ottoman naval activity round the coast increased. Possibly the Ottomans considered that their suzerainty was acknowledged. Server Pasha claimed in 1872 that Mukalla was an Ottoman base (2).

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Awadh bin Umar left Hyderabad with an introduction to Sir Bartle Frere from the Nizam's Minister, Sir Salar Jung (3). Sir Salar had influential Muslim friends and connections in Bombay (4). Frere's own experiences

(1) p.3.13 n.2

(2) p.3.16 n.2

(3) AIA 726, Capt.Hunter's report of Oct. 1876 to
Ag Res, Aden.

(4) Lawrence 'India', p.16, referring to Sir Salar's
secretary in 1879.

in Sind during the Mutiny gave him good cause for respecting Sir Salar, and his loyalty to the British alliance, and every reason for helping him and his friends where possible. In 1873, Frere quoted Sir Salar as a reliable Indian source who could confirm the danger to British interests in India of allowing an anglophobe local administration to be established in the Hadhramaut (1). Frere then had in mind Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi the Hopleh (2).

Frere believed that British influence on the south-east coast of Arabia, and in the Persian Gulf, should expand to counter increasing international interest in the area (3). The Viceroy, Sir John Lawrence, was opposed to such a British expansion. Frere and Lawrence respected each other, but their official contacts during Lawrence's Viceroyalty were not always smooth (4). Lawrence told Frere, in April, 1866, that '...we should

(1) NP Sir Bartle Frere - Lord Northbrook 19.5.1873

(2) See p.4.37 below.

(3) Kelly 'Gulf' p. 652-654.

(4) Smith 'Lord Lawrence' Vol II, p.427.

interfere as little as may be practical in the affairs of the Arab tribes on the sea-board ...' in Oman (1). Lawrence was unlikely to have approved any British involvement, in support of the Quaiti, on the coast of Hadhramaut. So Frere could not instruct Merewether publicly to assist Awadh bin Umar. Frere however possibly wrote privately to Merewether. Captain Hunter stated in 1876 that Frere wrote to Merewether and approved the latter issuing supplies to Awadh bin Umar (2). The Bombay Secretariat denied that such instructions had been issued. But, by then, Frere and Merewether had left India. The subject was not reopened. But Awadh bin Umar did embark at Bombay with a mixed force of about 200 armed Arabs and Rohillas, in a chartered steamer, on what was, effectively, a filibustering expedition (3) with Frere's knowledge (4).

Merewether issued a large quantity of ammunition

(1) Kelly 'Gulf' p.653

(2) AIA 726, Hunter's Report - Res of Oct 1876

(3) AIA 579, Prideaux's Report of 2.12.72, paras 11 & 15

(4) LB, B^o Despatch 23 of 18.4.67 - S of S

for muskets and cannon, and some tents, from the Aden arsenal to Awadh (1). Yet the Aden Annual Report for 1866/67 made no mention even of Awadh's visit, still less of the issue of stores. It is possible that Merewether acted on his own judgement. But it seems unlikely that both Captain Hunter, and Major Goodfellow, would have been misinformed about the authority behind Merewether's action in issuing the supplies. It is possible that Merewether interpreted Frere's instructions too liberally; Merewether possibly relied on Frere's retrospective support. Merewether had, indeed, received Frere's retrospective approval in 1866, for his unauthorised action against the Fadhli chief, contrary to official policy (2). Possibly Merewether arranged for the stores to be 'written off', as issued for use to his Abdali allies against the Fadhli tribe, with whom peace had not then been made. Another possibility is that the powder issued was old, or obsolete, stock

(1) AIA 579, Prideaux's report of 2.12.72, paras 11 & 15

(2) p. 2.16n.3

which had been 'condemned' and had to be disposed of. By 1866, ~~the garrison of Aden were no longer armed with muskets. The powder issued was for muskets and cannon.~~ Merewether's assistance was intervention in internal tribal affairs, but it may have been less formidable than the first impression suggests.

Merewether (1), and Frere, may have considered that British prestige could be increased locally, and the slave-trade reduced, by intervening discreetly to instal a grateful ruler in Shihr. Frere had worked to reduce the slave-trade. He had asked in 1864 that '... suitable representations may be made to the Turkish Government ...' on the slave trade in the Ottoman Red Sea ports (2). Other reports had been written in 1865 (3). Possibly, Frere and Merewether believed that a Kathiri occupation of Shihr would lead to an effective Ottoman presence there, or that even an independent Kathiri rule would encourage the slave-trade, and Frere was concerned about

(1) Roberts 'India' p.298

(2) LB, Despatch - S of S of 28.10.64 enclosing a report by the Captain of H.M.S. 'Pantaloen'

(3) LB, Despatch No 6 of 28.2.65 & No 2 of 13.5.65 - S of S

modest but increasing Ottoman naval strength in the Persian Gulf (1).

Merewether returned to Aden on 14th December from England. He had been held for consultations on future policy towards the Emperor Theodore of Abyssinia after his leave expired. Merewether was accepted at the India Office as the expert on Gulf of Aden and Abyssinian affairs. He had been in personal touch with senior officials (2), and had been able to judge how his unauthorised initiative against the Fadhli chief had been received. He was, therefore, well-qualified to judge what discreet action he could take to assist Awadh bin Umar. Possibly, Merewether risked a reprimand if his peccadillo was disclosed prematurely. But Merewether believed by March, 1867, that military operations would be necessary in Abyssinia (3). He was likely to be needed in the area in 1867 and the unauthorised issue of some

(1) LB Despatch No 3 of 12.1.67

(2) IOL, Pol. Dept., DO Corr. 1862-73, Sir John Kaye, (Sec., Secret & Pol. Dept.) - Merewether on 19.6.66 and on 21.8.66

(3) AAR 1866/67 (no paras)

gunpowder would not change that.

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Awadh bin Umar made an alliance on 7.2.1867 with the Kasadi Naqib for joint operations against the Kathir (1). By the terms of the agreement each ally was to provide MT\$50,000 for a joint war chest. Awadh was to obtain sole possession of Shihr and its dependencies after their capture. But, in the event of a long drawn out struggle, each of the allies was liable to pay a further MT\$50,000, if necessary. The allies were to '... be as brothers and friends and their countries will be one and the same ... and their enemy is one and their friend is one ...' (2). The agreement was signed by Naqib Salih bin Muhammad. It was not witnessed by his son and heir, Umar.

The alliance of the Kasadi Naqib of Mukalla with

(1) FO 78 3615, Printed papers on the Hadhramaut struggle passed by IO - FO on 10.9.81, based on suspect Quaiti sources

(2) From the agreement quoted in (1)

Awadh bin Umar ensured some capacity to blockade Shihr by Kasadi war-dhows. In the circumstances, it is not surprising that, after an inconclusive engagement outside Shihr on 29th April, the Kathiri garrison evacuated Shihr at night on 30th April (1). Low Kathiri morale, poor supplies, and the beginning of the summer humidity of an unfamiliar coastal climate, probably provide the main reasons for the Kathiri collapse. In addition, it is possible that some of the Kathir had returned home for the Id alFitr celebrations, on 17th February 1867, and had not returned to Shihr by April (2). Others might have left for home for the Id alHajj which was on 27th April. The Kathir tribesmen were unpaid volunteers and, as such, at liberty to come and go as they pleased.

The Yafai allies agreed later to attack the Kathir in Inner Hadhramaut. The joint forces would be under the Naqib's command, but the Naqib would be accompanied by

- (1) LB Despatch No 77 of 24.8.67 with copy of Res letter - SGB of 7.5.67, reporting Quaiti capture of Shihr
- (2) The Muslim and Christian Calendars G.S.P., Freeman-Grenville, London, 1962. (Hereafter Grenville 'Calendars').

Awadh bin Umar, or by one of the latter's brothers.

The resulting joint conquests would be divided equally between the allies. This later agreement was witnessed by Umar bin Salih, as well as being signed by his father, Naqib Salih. It also made clear that the anchorage of Ras Sharma (1), 20 miles each of Shihr was a dependency of Shihr. It seems improbable that Shihr's previous ruler had had any title to the cape or to the anchorage. It was, however, valuable to Shihr as the nearest sheltered anchorage for local craft. Being without any settlement, possession of Sharma yielded no taxable revenue.

In preparation for joint operations in Inner Hadhramaut, each of the allies agreed, in September, 1867, to contribute a further MT\$60,000. The Kasadi Naqib was allowed to pay MT\$2,000 p.a. instead of making one immediate payment. In October, the allies' expedition moved north against the Kathir in Tarim. It was not a success. No accounts, however, were ever produced (2),

(1) In Arabic, راس شرمه

(2) FO 78 3615, para 14, Res - SGB of 3.6.79, passed by IO to FO, 10.9.81

to show details of the expenses which Awadh bin Umar claimed from Naqib Umar bin Salih in 1873.

It is difficult to see what direct benefit the Kasadi Naqib expected to obtain from any joint acquisitions of territory in Inner Hadhramaut. The nearest Kathiri territory was about 60 miles inland from Shihr. The Quaiti family already controlled some western parts of the Wadi Hadhramaut. They would therefore have benefited from an expansion of their territory eastwards. The Kasadi Naqib could not benefit similarly; his inland territories were some 13 villages in Wadi Duan, south of the western end of the Wadi Hadhramaut, and far from the Kathiri-controlled areas (1).

It is possible that the Kasadi Naqib hoped to obtain Awadh bin Umar's friendship and subsequent support for his son and successor, Umar bin Salih. The Naqib may have also believed - or have been persuaded by Awadh bin Umar - that Shihr and Mukalla would be insecure until Kathiri power in Hadhramaut had been completely

(1) FO 78 3615, para 24, Res letter - SGB of 3.6.79, quoting from Naqib Umar bin Salih - Res

broken (1). It is also possible that the Yafai intention was to forestall a possible tribal alliance between the Kathir and the Saiban Confederations against the Quaiti and the Kasadi, by destroying the Kathir. The Quaiti brothers were ambitious and intriguing men. Awadh bin Umar was persuasive and calculating. So long as the old Kasadi Naqib lived, Awadh made no known claims for payment of the Kasadi share of the joint war chest. It is possible that no basis for the claims existed. Naqib Umar bin Salih could produce no correspondence of the period. Awadh's records were unique.

By 1869, the Naqib had no illusions about Awadh bin Umar's intentions towards Mukalla; the Naqib visited Major General E.L. Russell at Aden and explained the importance of stopping aid from Hyderabad to Awadh (2). According to Umar bin Salih, his father obtained a verbal promise '... that he should not fear from anyone as the English Government would protect him from all things ...'. Such an assurance was unauthorised, unrecorded, and of no practical value. Yet, bearing in mind Russell's over-

(1) Cf. p. 4.7 n. 2

(2) AIA 726 f 72-82, Naqib Umar - Res

optimistic forecasts to the Haushabi (1), and to the Abdali (2), chiefs, this irresponsible promise rings true. Some Resident had the Naqib's letter marked with a slip 'NPKIB' (3), in red ink (4), showing that he accepted the substance of the letter as important. Russell did try, ineffectually, to obtain guarantees through Bombay that the Hyderabad authorities would end assistance to Awadh bin Abdullah at Shihr.

In 1870, Russell commented on a Kathiri proposal to the Resident that the British should provide them with two steamers for operations off Shihr, on deferred terms (5). Russell wrote; '... There is no doubt [that] the Ketheree will endeavour to obtain the assistance of the Turks, as this power has for some time been watching events in that quarter ...! - Russell was correct: the Kathir did appeal to the Ottomans in 1872. Russell argued

(1) p.2.30 n.2

(2) p.2.43 n.1 and 2.42 n.2

(3) 'Note Please Keep in Book'

(4) Only the Resident could use red ink in a file

(5) FO 78 3186, Res - SGB, 31.3.70 f 154

that, because of the number of Indian traders in Mukalla, '... I cannot think it desirable to permit it to fall into the hands of either the Katheree or the Turks ...'. Russell's stated belief goes far towards confirming the likelihood of his having reassured the Kasadi Naqib in 1869 with a promise of British protection. But Russell's judgement was at fault. The Foreign Department objected strongly to the implication behind Russell's argument that British political interference and the flag should follow British-Indian traders.(1) Hadhramaut was, officially, independent and not of strategic importance to Britain. But, unofficially, Residents at Aden would continue to view the Hadhramaut coast, like all other places on the Gulf of Aden, with semi-proprietary interest. Foreign interest was unwelcome.

Awadh bin Umar may have chosen to bide his time, appreciating that both the Kathiri and Kasadi leaders would not live much longer. The Kathiri leader died in

(1) FO 78 3186 f 156, For. Dept. G of I - SGB, 17.7.70

1870. In 1871, Awadh arranged a Quaiti Kathiri truce and returned to Hyderabad. It is probable that Awadh had judged that the weak Umar bin Salih would be easier to overcome than his father (1). When Awadh heard of the old Naqib's death, he hurried back to Hadhramaut, proceeding straight to Mukalla to condole on Naqib Salih's death (2). Umar bin Salih claimed that Awadh began intrigues against him, at once, in Mukalla, and in Duan amongst the Saiban (3). It is possible that family rivalries within the Kasadi family gave Awadh bin Umar opportunities for intrigue. The late Naqib's father had seized Mukalla from his cousin, Abd arRub, in 1842 (4). The coup was not bloodless, and the new ruler's murders extended beyond his family rivals to their suspected

(1) AIA 644, Hunter's report - Res of 29.3.74

(2) AIA 644, Translation of Gujerati letter from Naqib Umar - Res, dated 23.2.74

(3) FO 78 3615, para 24, Res - SGB, 3.6.79, quoting the Naqib, passed by IO - FO, 10.9.81

(4) 'Colonial 123' p.31. Naqib Muhammad alKasadi starved his Seiyid Minister to death on suspicion of treachery

supporters. Some members of the senior branch of the Kasadi family escaped to India. There is, however, no indication whether Awadh bin Umar used these refugees, or their claims, for his own purposes in Mukalla.

The Naqib claimed that Awadh engineered the hostilities which broke out with the Saiban tribesmen. Awadh stayed for eight days in Mukalla and then went on to Shihhr. Soon after, Awadh sent his brother-in-law, Umar bin Awadh, accompanied by three Seiyids, to the Naqib with a letter, offering his assistance in settling the dispute. By then, Kasadi forces under the Naqib's uncle were in Duan, opposing the tribesmen there. The Naqib accepted Awadh's offer to bring the Amudi Shaikh and other Saiban leaders to Mukalla, and to make them accept the Naqib's terms (1). The Naqib claimed that he accepted the offer, naively, at its face value.

Awadh bin Umar wasted no time on receiving Umar bin Salih's reply; he set off without warning with 300 followers in attendance and a further 400 behind in reserve. He sent a messenger to announce his imminent

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.110-114 has some detail on the Saiban and the Amudi Shaikh, at a later period

arrival from Baqarain, less than 5 miles from Mukalla. Baqarain was also the source of the town's main water supply. The Naqib had barely time to receive his visitors at the gate of Mukalla. It is possible that Awadh hoped to take his host by surprise and so seize the town. Awadh may have intended to forestall any plans that the Naqib might make to quarter the Quaiti supporters outside the town walls. Awadh and his large escort entered Mukalla. His 400-strong reserve followed and occupied the Kasadi fort at Harshiyat, commanding the road to Duan and to the Kasadi expeditionary force. Awadh had arranged that some of his additional men from Harshiyat should infiltrate into Mukalla unobtrusively, in parties of five and ten men at a time, nominally visiting the Quaiti supporters within Mukalla. Awadh thus increased his superiority in men within Mukalla.

Umar bin Salih had a bodyguard of 100 armed slaves and a town garrison of 200 Yafai mercenaries. The Yafai mercenaries had been bribed by Awadh bin Umar not to support their employer in the discussions that followed. The Kasadi slaves remained loyal. But Awadh's men controlled the approaches to Mukalla. Awadh then asked

.....

Umar to repay the old Naqib's 'debt' of MT\$160,000 for the Kasadi share of expenses against the Kathir in 1867/68 (1).

Umar was almost a prisoner in his own town; he had no money to repay the 'debt'; and his Yafai mercenaries urged a settlement. He accepted Awadh's proposal that the Quaiti family should take a half-share in the Kasadi possessions, for a payment of MT\$240,000 (2). Awadh arranged payment of the balance of MT\$80,000 to the Naqib and left for Shihr (3). Mukalla continued to be dominated by the Quaiti followers, but the Naqib retained sole possession of the town citadel, in a strong position beside the landing place. The Naqib was able to send messages out of Mukalla by sea.

Brigadier J.W. Schneider was concerned throughout 1873 with the attempted Ottoman expansion south through the Yemen (4). He sent Captain W.F. Prideaux to

(1) See p.4.22 - 4.24

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' (1933 edition) Supplementary Agreement II, page vi

(3) Detail from Naqib's Gujarati letter - Res, p. n.

(4) See p.3.10 - 3.104

Mukalla to try and arrange a peaceful settlement.

An unsettled local quarrel provided an opening for Ottoman intervention. Prideaux called Awadh from Shihr for discussions. Agreement was, however, not reached between the Quaiti and Kasadi leaders; and Prideaux returned to Aden without a settlement, leaving Awadh in Mukalla. In the meantime, Umar bin Salih had recalled his forces from Duan. Awadh was, possibly, over-confident, or he failed to appreciate the significance of control of the narrow passes leading to Mukalla, of the plateau overlooking it, and of the town's water supply at Baqarain. He only controlled the access into Mukalla through the town gates.

The unexpected return of the Kasadi forces from Duan, and their occupation of the strategic sites which the Quaiti had neglected, caught Awadh and his men in a trap. Deprived of food and water from outside the town, Awadh was obliged to capitulate (1). There was little fighting. Only three Kasadis were reported to have been

(1) AIA 644, Petition of Awadh bin Umar - SGB through his agent in Bombay dated 11.6.74

killed. Umar bin Salih allowed Awadh to return to Shihr, leaving behind his payment of MT£80,000. By December, 1873, Umar bin Salih was in alliance with the Kathir against Awadh. By January, 1874, there were no Quaiti left in Mukalla (1).

The role of Mohsin bin Abdullah bin Ali alAulaqi in arranging the alliance between Umar bin Salih and the Kathir was not described in the British records. The old Naqib had, however, been on friendly terms, before his death, with Mohsin bin Abdullah and had asked the latter to be the guardian for his son. Possibly Mohsin looked for local allies to protect his village of alHazm from Awadh bin Umar. Mohsin joined with the Kathir, the Saiban Ba Umar of the rich agricultural area around Ghail ba Wazir, and the Kasadi Naqib. The Kathir, who raised a voluntary tribal levy, received some pay from the Naqib. The allies declared intention was to drive Awadh from Shihr. The Resident's sympathy was with the Naqib and his allies; he considered that '... the Kayatee Jemadar obtained possession [of Shihr] some years ago

(1) AIA 658, Aden News No 4 of 23-29.1.74

in a very questionable manner from the Katheerees ...'(1). After the Resident received the detailed report of the Naqib on ~~the~~ Awadh's behaviour in Mukalla, Schneider might have assumed that Awadh's methods were normally 'questionable' (2).

In December, 1873, Awadh's fortunes were at their lowest ebb: Shihir was blockaded by land and the Kathir had occupied the hamlet of Dufaigha, 5 miles east of Shihir (3). Awadh's prestige and his pocket had suffered from his intrigues. But his enemies had their own problems. Apparently the Kathir suffered, or faced, a food shortage. Mohsin bin Abdullah alAulaqi wrote to Seiyid Turki of Muscat from Hyderabad, asking him to freight a vessel with dates for the forces besieging Shihir (4). Mohsin also asked for Omani naval support to blockade Shihir. He tried to make his requests more

(1) AIA 658, Aden News No 5, 30.1.74-5.2.74

(2) AIA 644, Naqib - Res of 23.2.74

(3) AIA 644, Quaiti petition - SGB of 11.6.74

(4) FO 78 2755 f 188, Res Pers. Gulf's letter of 29.3.74 - SGB forwarded a copy of Mohsin's letter of 14.1.74

attractive by claiming that Shihr had been subordinate to Oman, and that the Seiyid Turki's ancestors had been traditional arbitrators in local disputes. By contrast, the Quaiti family were nouveaux riches whose wealth had gained them control of Shihr. Mohsin did not however suggest that Shihr should revert to Omani rule after its recapture. But he did promise vaguely that '...whatever expenses may be incurred are on all of us...'. Turki, however, had enough problems of his own. He was incapable of controlling his own rebellious country and had no money and resources to spare for external adventures (1). It is probable that he never replied (2). The Kathir apparently got no dates; instead, the 3,000 tribesmen evacuated Dufaigha and retired to the agricultural area of Ghail ba Wazir, about 15 miles north-west of Shihr, early in 1874 (3). The land blockade of Shihr was lifted.

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(1) Kelly 'Gulf' p.775-776

(2) p. 4.35 n.4, Ag.Pol. Agent Muscat believed that Turki would not reply.

(3) AIA 644, Numbers from Hunter's report of 29.3.74 - Res

The Ottoman reoccupation of the Yemen began in 1872; it changed the 'status quo' in south-west Arabia and offered the attractive possibility of Ottoman assistance for any underdog in major local quarrels. In 1872, the Kathir applied for assistance. They were invited to send a representative to Sanaa by Mushir Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha. The Kathiri Regent, Ubud bin Salim, went himself, without disclosing his rank. The Pasha's information was not reassuring. He told Ubud that the Porte proposed to make over the Province of Hadhramaut to Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi the Moplah '... to bring [it] into order ...' once the Yemen, including the Abdali area, was under Ottoman administration. Ubud brought this disturbing news to Aden when he called on the Resident (1).

Ubud bin Salim may have been trying to play off the Ottomans against the British to obtain British naval assistance against Shihr (2). It is possible that Ubud

(1) LI, Res - SGB of 16.1.73, forwarded by Viceroy to S of S, 14.2.73, reporting Ubud's interview

(2) p. 4.27n. 5

knew of the Resident's current concern at possible Ottoman action against Lahej (1). He mentioned the Pasha's intention of bringing all the Yemen under Ottoman administration. Ubud's news was taken seriously by the Resident, and by the Foreign Department who quickly copied the Resident's letter to the Secretary of State. The Resident could not take sides in a Hadhrami quarrel, and he had no reason to do so. Nor had the Foreign Department, or the India Office, cause for intervention. Ubud was given no hope of British assistance. But Ubud's visit possibly caused the Resident to send Prideaux to Mukalla and to Shihr in the autumn of 1873, to try and mediate. A settlement of that quarrel would remove a cause for Ottoman intervention. Frere advocated stationing '... a small English [naval] vessel ...' off Mukalla to watch and to prevent any 'coup de main' (2).

The Foreign Department's attitude towards Hadhramaut had changed in 1873 from indifference to a recognition of the strategic importance to India, and possibly to

(1) p.3.19 -.3.23

(2) FO 78 2753, Memo Frere - Lord Granville, 3.12.73

Britain, of the Hadhramaut Coast. There was still no wish for any Indian involvement in the area. But the Foreign Department had begun to share the Aden Residency's distaste for any other foreign presence in the Gulf of Aden. Officials of the Government of Bombay had acquired that concern earlier. In 1870, the Political Department had shared Russell's concern for the security of British-Indian trading interests in Mukalla (1). But the Naqib's request for British protection had been refused. A Quaiti request for British protection for Shihr in 1872 was ignored (2), as apparently an earlier approach by Awadh bin Umar to Sir Seymour Fitzgerald had been. Fitzgerald's relations with Lord Mayo were, however, poor (3). He was therefore unlikely to put forward a proposal for discussion that Lord Mayo would reject. In general, Lord Mayo followed Lawrence's policy of not extending British commitments beyond India's existing borders.

(1) p.4.27 note 5

(2) FO 78 3186, Letter from Quaiti Agent, Bombay to SGB forwarded by SGB - For Dept, 11.11.72 and copied to IO. Forwarded by IO - FO

(3) IOL, Argyll microfilms Reel 317, Northbrook - Argyll, 6.12.72

But the Political Department was concerned about the political and strategic implications of the alleged Ottoman naval pressure to make the Shihr administration fly the Ottoman flag. The Bombay correspondence on the Quaiti request for British protection was therefore copied to the India Office (1). The India Office passed it to the Foreign Office for information without comment. In 1874 the Quaiti family appealed for help to the Ottoman Governor-General at Sanaa, allegedly giving a present of MT\$20,000 (2). The Quaiti emissary received cold comfort. He was promised that the Quaiti appeal would be forwarded to the Porte. Probably the Pasha was unwilling to enter into any commitments in Hadhramaut after his experience of the Ottoman debacle in Lahej in December, 1873 (3).

The Government of India could have interfered decisively by sea, but it did not wish to do so. The Secretary to the Foreign Department wrote; '... the

(1) p.4.39 n.2

(2) AIA 644, Res - SGB, 2.3.74, reported to For Dept
by SGB, 24.3.74

(3) p.3.101 n.1 and n.2

dispute between the Jemadar [Awadh bin Umar] and the Naqib of Mukalla is a matter with which the British Government does not desire to interfere ...' (1).

Aden officials had personal experience of, and contact with, the contestants; and they found it impossible to keep away. Brigadier Schneider tried to maintain friendly relations with both sides, and so retain Residency influence throughout the area. That was a very personal interpretation of the way in which the official policy of non-intervention in tribal affairs should be carried out. It required considerable skill to visit bitter enemies only 40 miles apart, to deny each what they wanted, and yet to leave them broadly convinced that, although they were independent, their contact with the British was more valuable than any foreign alliance or suzerainty could be.

In March, 1874, Captain Hunter was sent to visit Hadhramaut with the Residency Interpreter, Salih Jaffer. Hunter was instructed to offer the Resident's 'good offices', again, in the hope of arranging a settlement.

(1) AIA 644, C.U. Aitchison, Sec. For. Dept. - SGB, 13.2.74

But he had to make clear that '... the British Government does not desire to interfere ...' (1). This last instruction seems to have ruined any likelihood of Hunter arranging a Quaiti-Kasadi settlement of their differences. Since Naqib Umar's prospects were encouraging he had no cause for stopping operations. Awadh had good reason for wanting to preserve what he still retained, but he had nothing to offer the Kasadis in return.

The Naqib wanted the British to intervene in the fighting on his behalf, because he claimed (2) that Sir Bartle Frere had promised Mukalla British protection from foreign attacks in return for the signature of a new treaty, banning the slave trade (3). The Residency interpreted Sir Bartle Frere's letter differently. Hunter was required to inform the Naqib that Frere's promise applied only to foreign, and not to local, attacks.

(1) AIA 644, Res instructions - Hunter, 24.3.74

(2) AIA 726, Res - SGB, 12.9.76, quoting Naqib

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXIV of 7.4.73

It was arguable that Awadh's attack was a 'foreign' one. Awadh had been born in Hyderabad and was half Indian. His mercenaries, brought from India, and his operations in Hadhramaut, were financed from Hyderabad, although the sources were private Quaiti family funds. The Naqib was apparently not very disturbed at the British refusal to intervene. He possibly considered that the lack of positive British support would delay, but not damage, his prospects of victory.

By June, Abdullah and Awadh bin Umar were sufficiently worried to ask for British mediation (1). They asked that a British officer should enquire into, and settle, the Quaiti-Kasadi dispute. No mention was, however, made of the Kathir, of the Ba Umar of Ghail ba Wazir, or of Mohsin bin Abdullah alAulaqi, who were allied with the Naqib. Awadh was certainly unlikely to consider that the Kathiri claim to Shihr was better than his own. Possibly the Quaiti intention was to divide the Kasadis from the Kathir, by making a settlement

(1) AIA 644, Petition by Quaiti agent in Bombay - SGB
of 11.6.74

with the Naqib, and so securing the release of two ships that the Quaitis had bought in India.

The British had impounded two Quaiti-owned ships because they were British-registered vessels. They therefore could not be employed, under the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1870, in foreign wars. Schneider had detained the Quaiti's S.S. 'Pelwan' in April, when she called at Aden to coal. He suspected that she would be used for warlike operations (1). Schneider telegraphed Bombay for instructions. The decision was that the 'Pelwan', and a sailing ship, the 'Sultan Pasha', would be released for legitimate trade, but that they must not carry war-supplies or soldiers, because of their British registration. This rule was also applied to the S.S. 'Oran', bought jointly by the Naqib and Mohsin alAulaqi (1). But the Government of Bombay did accept the right of the two rival and independent parties to capture each other's vessels at sea or in harbour, or to blockade each other's ports (2). That was just

(1) AIA 644, Res tel. of 10.4.74 - SGB

(2) AIA 644, Res - SGB, 6.5.74 and Govt of B^o Resolution 3034 of 1.6.74

recognising that 'a state of war' existed between the Quaiti and the Kasadi and their allies.

The British considered that the Ottomans might intervene in the fighting, so the British Ambassador to the Porte was required '... to take a favourable opportunity of using ... legitimate influence to prevent the Turks from interfering ...' (1). Elliot spoke to the Grand Vizier and was assured that the Governor General of the Yemen had made no mention of events on the coast of Hadhramaut; that the Porte had no wish to intervene there (2). The Pasha at Sanaa knew the Porte's views. The Grand Vizier considered that fresh instructions were unnecessary. But, from subsequent Ottoman claims, it is probable that he wished to avoid committing himself to any additional correspondence with Elliot which could cause misunderstandings with Britain (3).

The Quaiti remained on the defensive throughout 1874, with Kathiri pressure against them by land and Kasadi pressure by sea. The Kathir ambushed a column of 800

(1) FO 78 2755, FO - Sir Henry Elliot, 18.7.74

(2) FO 78 2755, Elliot - FO, 20.8.74

(3) But Cf. p.4.79 n.1

Quaiti followers coming from Hadhramaut, killing 30 and capturing quantities of stores. Kasadi war-dhows successfully attacked Quaiti dhows supplying Awadh bin Umar's forces at Shiheir. Money, supplies, and mercenaries were sent to Shihr from India. But not all the mercenaries and stores arrived; some were detained at Aden, en route for Shihr (1).

Throughout the year, the Naqib kept up a partially-effective sea-blockade of Shihr and Shiheir (2). This was a setback which Awadh might have avoided had he had the use of his steamer, the 'Pelwan', and the sailing ship, 'Sultan Pasha', between Bombay and Shihr. The Quaiti tried to circumvent the Foreign Enlistment Act by buying another steamer, the 'Phlox', in Bombay and planning to re-register her in Portuguese Goa. But the plan was discovered by the Naqib, who warned the Resident (3). The Governor-General of Portuguese India

(1) AIA 644, Petition of Ghulam Khan - Res, 18.8.74

(2) AIA 644, Naqib - Res, received 20.12.74, reporting the seizure of arms, ammunition and stores bound for Shihr

(3) AIA 644, Naqib - Res, 27.10.74

agreed, at the Governor of Bombay's request, to frustrate the Quaiti plan by refusing registration.

The Kasadi blockade was hurting; the Quaitis protested about it to the Resident in September (1). In answer to further protests the Resident replied in December that; '... the seizing of vessels attempting to break the blockade of Shuhur imposed by the Nukeeb of Maculla, is according to usage ...' (2). The Kasadis enjoyed the advantage of good anchorages to the east of Shihr at Qarn and Sharma, and to the west at Mukalla and Burum. Awadh's ships had no protected anchorage west of Mukalla where they could shelter and reprovision, except in neutral Aden. In addition, Shihr was dangerous for dhows during the south-west monsoon. It was an open roadstead with anchorages in depths of from 7 to 12 fathoms (3).

In November, conditions appeared so favourable to the Naqib that he again rejected peace proposals agreeable

(1) AIA 644 f 395, Abdullah bin Omer - Res, rec'd 4.9.74

(2) AIA 644, Res - Awadh bin Omer, Dec 1874

(3) 'Colonial 123' p.69

to Awadh (1), proposed by Colonel F. Schneider (2), the Acting Resident, during a visit to Mukalla and Shihr. Awadh had warned the Acting Resident that, failing British intervention, he would have to make an Ottoman alliance to maintain his position at Shihr (3). Colonel Schneider disbelieved Awadh; and the Government of Bombay accepted Colonel Schneider's view (4). But, in 1882, it was discovered that AbdAllah bin Umar probably had asked for Ottoman assistance from the Pasha at Sanaa in 1874 or 1875 (5). Possibly this Quaiti appeal resulted in an Ottoman request to the British Ambassador at Constantinople in May, 1875 to '... take ... coercive measures against all action by sea on the part of Ghalib Kissiri [sic] (6) or his adherents with a view to

(1) AIA 644, Report of A^g Res - SGB, 11.11.74

(2) A brother of General J.W. Schneider

(3) AIA 644, A^g Res - SGB, 13.11.74

(4) AIA 644, B^o Resolution 7516 of 12.12.74

(5) IOL, BSC 85/88, F.M. Hunter's Memo of 3.4.82

(6) Ghalib Kathiri, chief of the Kathir, had died in 1870

maintaining the tranquility of the coast ...' (1).

In 1875, Awadh and his brother Salih bought a large war dhow for £MT18,000 and proclaimed a Quaiti counter-blockade of Mukalla in March (2). A steamer was also purchased in Italy and registered under Ottoman colours to avoid the provisions of the British Foreign Enlistment Act. The owner of the S.S. 'Jawad' was described as Said Ali, 'Turkish merchant' and a brother of '... Mr Hady Ali, merchant, Turkish subject, domiciled at Hadhramaut ...' (3). Said Ali was also Awadh's Agent in Shihhr. The 'Jawad's' crew were enlisted before the Ottoman Consul at Genoa. It may therefore have been AbdAllah bin Umar's intention, when seeking help from the Pasha at Sanaa (4), to claim to be under the Ottomans so that a vessel could be registered for the Quaiti under Ottoman colours. If Ottoman warships had intervened,

(1) FO 78 2756, Sir Henry Elliot - FO, 15.5.75

(2) BSC, P & S 75, Memo of 17.4.75 by Capt Prideaux - Res

(3) BSC, PS 75 f 445-451, Res - SGB, 17.5.75

(4) See p. 4.48 and 5. Either late in 1874 or early in 1875, before the registration of the 'Jawad' as an Ottoman vessel

the British would have reacted forcefully (1), and the Ottomans would then have been humiliated as they had been at Lahej in 1873.

The 'Jawad's' Captain was under orders from her new owner not to put in to Aden, in case the vessel was arrested. However, the crew of the 'Jawad' were so dissatisfied with the poor mechanical state of the engine, the absence of necessary stores, and with their bad rations, that they sailed the 'Jawad' to Aden, to complain to the Italian Consul on 18th August, 1875 (2). The ship was released by the Resident on condition that she traded peaceably between the Persian Gulf, India, Aden and the Red Sea. She was not allowed to trade to Shihr. The 'Jawad' should, therefore, have been of no help in Awadh's campaign against Mukalla or in breaking the Kasadi blockade of Shihr. But she did occasionally call at Shihr, to the Naqib's indignation, while on passage (3).

(1) AIA 644, A^S Res - SGB, 13.11.74, had suggested that British action should be taken if the Ottomans intervened. Bombay agreed.

(2) BSC PS 75, as note 3, p.4.49, ...

(3) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, 10.1.76 & 17.1.76

There were always plausible Quaiti excuses for the visits, such as a need for fresh water. The vessel was wrecked on a reef off Hodeida in 1876, while carrying Persian pilgrims (1).

The disadvantages to local trade of the Kasadi blockade were becoming apparent to Aden traders when the north-east monsoon shipping season opened in the autumn of 1874. Coastal shipping from the Persian Gulf and from India, to Gulf of Aden ports, and Zanzibar customarily called in at Hadhrami ports for water, shelter, repairs or trade. By the Declaration of Paris in 1856 international maritime lawyers had agreed that blockades must be enforced by sufficient ships to be effective. 'Paper' blockades were unlawful, but they were not unknown (2). Quaiti war dhows probably tried to intercept shipping off their home port of Shihr, but well out to sea, because they had no base west of Mukalla. There was therefore no evidence, before a

(1) BSC, P & S 75 f 285, Aden News Report No 8 of 1876

(2) The Federal States declared a blockade of 3,000 miles of Confederate coastline with 42 ships

vessel was stopped, that it was bound for Mukalla. Country craft habitually used coastal waters for most journeys. The Resident therefore proposed that '... the Government of India should not allow the Nakeeb of Maculla and the Jemadar of Shihr to maintain hostile fleets at Aden ...' (1). The reference to keeping 'hostile fleets at Aden' appears to refer to the south Arabian coast between Aden and Ras Sharma. The blockades had degenerated into something near piracy; and the Resident decided that actions, such as the Quaiti seizure of dhows 12-15 miles off Shihr, '... by petty Arab chiefs ignorant of civilized usages could not be allowed by the Government of India....' (2).

In the Gulf of Oman the policy had been recently established that local maritime warfare interfered with legitimate trade and would be prevented there by the Royal Navy, as it was in the Persian Gulf.(3). But

- (1) LA, Res copied - S of S, 30.4.75
- (2) LA, Instructions by the Res to his Assistant, Captain Prideaux, before the latter proceeded to Mukalla and Shihr, copied - S of S with Res letter of 30.4.75
- (3) Kelly 'Gulf' p.699-701. Policy laid down in 1870

naval operations by either side against the other were allowed. In 1875 the system was extended to the Gulf of Aden. But that was partly a declaration of intent for British convenience. The ban was not enforced by an increased British naval presence; and no notice was taken when Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi's embryonic administration asked for British action to prevent piracy on the coast of Dhufar (1).

By July, the Foreign Department supported Schneider's concern for legitimate trading vessels. British policy would remain one of non-interference by land, but the Resident was required to '... call the rival parties strictly to account for any acts prejudicial to the interests of British subjects ... in consequence of the so-called blockade of Maculla ...'. The Foreign Office informed Sir Henry Elliot at Constantinople of the official Indian view (2). In July, the Foreign Department endorsed Schneider's policy, which Prideaux had enforced on the

(1) FO 78 3615

(2) FO 78 2755, FO Despatch - Elliot of 30.8.75

following the IO passing correspondence to the
FO on 21.8.75

Quaitis in April by the threat of HMS 'Vulture's' guns (1). Prideaux informed both Shihr and Mukalla that their blockades were no longer recognised, that they were illegal, and that the Royal Navy would ensure the security of trading vessels off the south Arabian coast. Awadh was required to pay Rs6042 compensation to the owners and shippers of goods on the three vessels that he had detained and to release the two vessels he still held. The third vessel had escaped from Shihr, by cutting her cable, and had fled to Aden with news of the 'piracy'. Awadh tried to justify his actions as retaliation for the Naqib's actions against vessels carrying goods for Shihr, but gave in within hours of the deadline of a bombardment by HMS Vulture (1).

The ban on naval blockades worked, in the long term, against the Kasadis, since the Naqib's war-dhows were more effective than Awadh's. Relieved of the Kasadi blockade, Awadh was able to bring in supplies to Shihr unhindered. There is no evidence that there was ever any Royal Navy supervision of the cargoes that the Quaiti-

(1) BSC P & S 75 f 265, Res - SGB, 30.4.75

owned ships carried, even when they broke the British ban not to call at Shihr (1). This ban expired on 9th May, 1875, after only six months (2). Schneider thought that it was still in force in January, 1876 (3). But, possibly to prevent R.N. searches, the Quaiti sailing vessel, 'Sultan Pasha', was sold to, and re-registered in Basra, under the name of, Nasr Abdul Habib alQuaiti (4). Thereafter, she could call at Shihr with cargo without risk of British seizure, because she was under Ottoman colours. She was also armed with two guns which would have been illegal if she had remained under British colours and had been used on warlike operations. With supplies coming in freely to Shihr in 1876, the Quaitis began to gain ground.

Schneider probably realised that the British ban on

(1) p. 4.50 n.3

(2) AIA 726, Bombay Resolution 674 of 8.2.76

(3) AIA 726, Res - SGB, 17 and 20.1.76

(4) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, Jan. 1876 (no date). The

Naqib's information was usually accurate on Quaiti affairs.

blockades would benefit Awadh. Schneider wrote; '... We may expect in time to see a powerful Mahomedan Chief established there [in Mukalla] allied with the Nizam: a state of things by no means desirable when considered in connection with the ambitious designs of the Khedive (1) on the African Coast outside the Straits of Bab al Mandab ...' (2). Awadh's family financial resources now began to influence Hadhramaut affairs decisively. In May, 1876, Awadh was reported to have cabled to Hyderabad for MT\$30,000. He had already received, according to the Naqib, Rs10,000 brought by an Austrian-Lloyd steamer on the regular Bombay-Europe service (3). Owing (4) to a smallpox epidemic at Aden (5), the steamer called at Shihr instead of Aden.

The Acting Resident, Major G.R. Goodfellow, wrote to

(1) p.6.11 - 6.23

(2) LA, Res - SGB, copied S of S, 27.4.75. . . .

(3) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, 1.5.76

(4) Marginal note by Capt. Hunter in the file explaining the reason for the visit

(5) Hunter 'Aden' p.177 noted an epidemic for one month in 1876

Bombay complaining about '... the unsatisfactory relations still existing with the contending Arab tribes at Makulla and Shehr and the Hyderabad State ...' (1). Goodfellow was strongly prejudiced against the continuing Quaiti occupation of Shihr. He noted marginally in a Residency file that '... The Jemadar of Shihr has no more right to Shehr than I have ...' (2). Goodfellow's complaint was therefore designed to assist the Naqib, who had no resources in Hyderabad. Mukalla was mentioned with Shihr to avoid any outward appearance of bias by Goodfellow. His protest, however, was no more effective than earlier protests had been.

Between 1869 and 1876, Sir Salar Jung was often requested by British Residents in Hyderabad to prevent intervention by Arabs in the Nizam's employment, in the affairs of Hadhramaut. The British Resident there, C.B. Saunders, was not a strong personality. Northbrook criticised him(3). Sir Salar, however, liked Saunders,

(1) AIA 726, Ag Res - SGB, 23.5.76

(2) AIA 726 f 185, Undated pencilled note

(3) IOL, Argyll microfilms Reel 317, Northbrook - Argyll, 8.7.72

so the Viceroy did not transfer him elsewhere. From 1872-1875, Sir Salar's relations with the British were strained by claims which he made on behalf of Hyderabad, and about which he felt deeply (1). Neither the Liberal nor the Conservative Governments during this period were willing to restore territory to Hyderabad. The Foreign Department were therefore reluctant to press Sir Salar on other matters, such as Awadh's support from Hyderabad Arabs (2). When Colonel P.S.Lumsden was acting Resident in Hyderabad during Saunders' absence on leave in 1872/73 Northbrook anticipated a more forceful representation of British views. But hostilities in coastal Hadhramaut did not develop until 1874. Lumsden therefore had no cause to raise British objections to intervention in Arabia from Hyderabad. Between July 30th, 1874 and

(1) For details of Sir Salar's feelings about the recovery of the Assigned Districts of Berar, see IOL, MSS EUR F86/107 (pages not numbered).

(2) Argyll microfilms Reel 317, Northbrook - Argyll, 17.11.72 and AIA 726, Offg Sec. For. Dept. quoting Gov. Gen. in Council's views to Offg Res, Hyderabad, 10.2.76.

July 29th, 1875, Sir Salar received at least nine letters on the matter from the Resident at Hyderabad (1). Most went unanswered! The British wanted '... effectual measures ... to prevent the transmission from Hyderabad of the funds necessary for the prosecution of the war ...'. Sir Salar took no such measures.

The Resident at Aden was ill-informed about developments in Hadhramaut; and the Resident at Hyderabad was worse informed. Hadhramaut was 'independent', and the Foreign Department's policy was to maintain a 'status quo' there which had already been unbalanced. Saunders and later Residents at Hyderabad relied for much of their information on what they were told by Sir Salar, or by such of the Arab Jemadars as Sir Salar sent to them. The '... complete and precise information [required] on the subject of aid and assistance rendered by certain Arabs in Hyderabad in the contentions prevailing in Arabia ...' (2) possibly was not available. Certainly Sir Salar Jung gave very little information; and what he

(1) AIA 726 f 73-81

(2) AIA 726, Res, Hyderabad - Sir Salar, 2.10.74

gave was heavily biased. Sir Salar was proud of Hyderabad's local autonomy and he resented any apparent British interference in Hyderabad's internal affairs.

The Foreign Department belatedly claimed that any interference by Hyderabad government servants in the affairs of foreign states was a breach of Article 15 of Hyderabad's Treaty of 1800 with the British. The Department chose to blame Sir Salar's 'misunderstanding' of an earlier request to stop aid going to Hadhramaut upon Colonel C.B. Saunders. Sir Salar had chosen to understand the request as an invitation to him to mediate between the two parties in Hadhramaut. But it was not only Saunders who failed to get official policy enforced; nor only Sir Salar who knew how to manage British officials in Hyderabad. In June, 1875, the officiating Resident in Hyderabad, Sir R.J. Meade, was cleverly influenced by Salih bin Umar al Quaiti. On the Foreign Department's orders (1), Meade had instructed the Nizam's Minister to prevent the despatch of money to the warring parties in Hadhramaut. Salih called on Meade. The Resident was

(1) AIA 726, Off^s Sec. For.Dept. - Off^s Res, Hyderabad,
10.2.76

flattered by Salih's behaviour; '... nothing could be more respectful than Barak Jung's [Salih bin Umar's Hyderabad title] language and demeanour ...' (1).

Salih persuaded the susceptible Meade that the British ban on money transfers to Hadhramaut would leave his brothers, and their women, children, and dependents there destitute. Salih had supported his interview with a convincing written petition. Meade forwarded the petition to the Foreign Department for reconsideration of its orders with the comment that '... the strict enforcement of the orders ... will unavoidably press most harshly on him [Salih bin Umar] ...' (1).

The Naqib reported in July, 1876, that Quaiti money had turned the whole country against him and that his tribal allies had deserted him (2). By the end of August, the Kathir had evacuated the main centre of Ghail ba Wazir, which they had garrisoned for the Naqib (3). The Aulaqi forces had lost the outpost of Mayan alMasjid (3)

(1) AIA 726, Off^g Res, Hyderabad - For Dept

(2) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, 28.7.76

(3) AIA 726, Awadh bin Omer - Res, received 10.9.76

and were besieged in alHazm (1). Sir Salar's
 partisanship, and Quaiti family funds from Hyderabad,
 had enabled Awadh to recover from his precarious position
 in 1874. It was too late for the Viceroy's reliance
 '... upon Nizam's Government to stop ...' money transfers
 altering the situation (2).

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The intervention of the Sharif of Mecca and the Residency
 attitude towards that intervention.

In March, 1876, Sharif AbdAllah bin Aun of Mecca
 offered his mediation, provided that both belligerents
 agreed in advance to accept his judgement. In the event
 of a subsequent rejection, or a breach of the peace, by
 one side, the defaulter's property (3) would be taken
 over by '... those appointed by the High Government ...' (4).

(1) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, rec'd 10.9.76

(2) AIA 726, For.Sec. - Res, Hyderabad, 10.7.76

(3) The implication was that it was not sovereign territory

(4) AIA 726, Res - Naqib, rec'd 5.4.76 enclosing the
 Sharif's letter

The Acting Resident understood that phrase to mean the Porte, which was usually referred to as 'the highest Government' (1). However, there is no Arabic copy of the Sharif's letter, which was returned to the Naqib, so the accuracy of the translation cannot be checked. The Resident may not have been justified in seeing the letter as a veiled method of asserting Ottoman supremacy in Hadhramaut. Indeed, the Sharif was later reported to be opposed to more Ottoman intervention in south Arabia because a stronger Ottoman presence in Arabia would have reduced his own power (2). The Sharif specifically wrote that the Porte did not know of the dispute.

The Sharif was so influential in Jeddah and Mecca that '... the power of the Turkish authorities seemed to be entirely nominal ...' (3). The Ottomans were concerned for the security of their European frontiers and fighting had occurred between Ottoman forces and Zaidi tribesmen in the Yemen (4). The Porte was in no

(1) الدولة العالية or الحكومة العالية

(2) FO 78 3615, H.M. Amb. C'ple - FO, 9.4.80

(3) BSC P & S 76, Report of Capt. Wodehouse R.N. of H.M.S. Teazer of 5.7.76

(4) Servia and Montenegro declared war in July 1876 and the Bulgarian Atrocities had occurred in May. An attack by Russia was likely

position to provide troops for new commitments in Hadhramaut, so it appears unlikely that the Sharif's initiative was Ottoman inspired. But Aden Residency officials had suspected Ottoman influence in developments in Hadhramaut and in Dhufar since 1850. Goodfellow was convinced that '... ere long the attention of the Turkish Government will be drawn to the ports of Makulla and Sheher ...' (1). Schneider, departing on leave, had advised the Naqib to reject the Sharif's offer; '... those at Mecca have no concern whatever with the affairs of your country ...' (2). Schneider feared lest Ottoman influence might replace British influence on the Hadhramaut coast, if the Sharif intervened. Schneider wanted to preserve the Hadhrami 'status quo', already affected by the opening of the Suez Canal, unbalanced by Quaiti remittances from Hyderabad, and possibly influenced by Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi's arrival in Dhufar (3). Despite sympathy for the Naqib, Schneider was prepared to

(1) AIA 726, A^g Res - SGB, 23.5.76

(2) AIA 726, Res - SGB, 8.4.76

(3) p.5.14 - 5.15

sacrifice Kasadi interests if he could thus exclude the Sharif's influence. The British refused to accept the Naqib's claim to British protection by virtue of Frere's undertaking to his father (1).

In May, 1876, the Secretary of State agreed that there might be 'no serious objection' (2) to mediation between the two sides '... if both belligerents should apply with apparent sincerity for the friendly offices of the Resident ...' (3). The Officiating Resident, G.R. Goodfellow, commented marginally in the Aden file that Awadh was unlikely to seek British intervention, because '... the Resident knows too much of his affairs ...' (4). In Goodfellow's view, the Residency should reject Awadh's claim to \$MT240,000 against the Naqib. In addition, Awadh should be warned that Shihr would not be protected

- (1) AIA 726, Res - SGB, 12.10.76 forwarding a translation of Frere's Arabic agreement with the late Naqib, but without a file copy
- (2) Underlined four times in the file, in apparent irritation
- (3) AIA 726, S of S - Gov.Gen., 18.5.76, forwarded by U/S For.Dept. - SGB, 4.8.76
- (4) AIA 726, Comment dated 18.9.76

against a foreign attack, in the hope that Awadh would then accept British mediation; but there was no British undertaking to protect Shihr from foreign attack. Furthermore, the Hyderabad Resident had been informed that '... the dispute [between Awadh and the Naqib] is not one in which the Government of India has any intention of interfering ...' (1) It is probable, allowing for conditions in Hyderabad, that Salih bin Umar and his brothers had been told of this official view.

In September, 1876, the Naqib had '... no defence but God and the English Government ...' (2); he appealed to the Resident to arrange a two months' truce; Awadh had an estimated 5,000 men under arms; the Naqib had 800 (3). The Naqib's ally, Mohsin alAulaqi, was 'in extremis', besieged by Awadh. The main Aulaqi fort was badly damaged and Awadh expected its surrender within

(1) AIA 726 f 91, U/S For.Dept. - Res, Hyderabad

(2) AIA 726, Naqib - Res, rec'd 10.9.76

(3) AIA 726 f 241-248, Residency interpreter's report of his visit to the Naqib and to Awadh bin Umar on 26-27 September 1876

a few days when Salih Jaffer insisted on visiting him at his camp outside alHazm. Awadh refused to agree to a truce that would save alHazm, but he reluctantly offered one for six months to the Naqib. The latter would not desert his embattled Aulqi ally and rejected Awadh's offer.

After Awadh had captured alHazm, he possibly planned to complete his operations by a seaborne landing at Mukalla. A threatened feint in November did not develop into an attack (1). The approach to Mukalla was made dangerous by a reef offshore and the landing place was covered by the town citadel. The Quaiti seaborne moves were possibly directed partly against the morale of the Kasadi forces, with a view to wearing down their will to resist, and partly as a threat to induce the Naqib to tie down more of his forces in Mukalla and so to prevent their use in defending other Kasadi villages or in offensive operations against Quaiti positions.

(1) AIA 726; Naqib - Res, 22.11.76.

The Resident returned from leave in November and decided to try and intervene. He visited the two ports in the I.G.S. 'Dagmar', escorted by H.M.S. 'Vestal' (1). Schneider needed all the pressure that he could apply, unofficially, to reinforce his arguments for a negotiated settlement. Awadh knew that time was on his side. The Foreign Department had made official policy clear.

'... So long as either belligerent continues obstinate, it is clear that the British Government cannot interpose effectually between the parties without adopting more active measures than [the Govt. of India] is prepared to adopt, or than Her Majesty's Government has authorised ...' (2).

Schneider's local prestige was high, and Awadh bin Umar was too dependent upon sea communications to be able to risk misjudging the official British attitude. Awadh agreed to a two years' truce with the Naqib (3). He

(1) Since the 'Dagmar' only carried a 2-pounder for saluting purposes, H.M.S. 'Vestal's presence was more imposing

(2) AIA 726, U/S For.Dept. - SGB, 25.11.76

(3) AIA 726, Res tel. - SGB, 25.12.76

.....

could not have refused without offending the Resident, after offering a truce in the previous September through the Residency Interpreter. But Awadh could, and did, avoid committing himself to a negotiated settlement which would have lost him the chance of capturing Mukalla. Awadh claimed that he, personally, agreed; but, that as his brothers, AbdAllah in Shibam, and Salih in Hyderabad, had joined with him in the 1873 agreement to purchase half the Kasadi possessions, he must consult them before replying. That bought time; the Resident could not wait at Shihr for an answer. Awadh also claimed that his elder brother, AbdAllah, was the ruler of all Quaiti territory on the coast, as well as inland. That provided an excuse for Awadh later refusing the Resident's intervention, without offending Schneider. But even the agreement to a 2 years' truce was an expensive concession. While hostilities continued, Awadh had to pay Indian and Arab mercenaries.

Awadh now had his hands tied on the coast until Schneider left Aden in May, 1877, but Awadh was free to strengthen his position in the interior. By returning

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the Quaiti-held portion of Tarim to the Kathir (1), the Quaitis obtained a ten year truce with the Kathir (2). In September, 1877, Awadh refused to submit the Quaiti-Kasadi dispute to the new Resident's arbitration and recommenced hostilities. Awadh's excuse was that the Quaitis had rejected other offers of mediation by the Ottomans, and by Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi, in Dhufar. At the India Office, the view was that Britain was '... well out of it ...' (3). Meantime, Awadh seized Dis, Sharma and alQarn, east of Shihr. The Naqib complained about the Quaiti seizures. He was informed by the Resident that British interests were limited to a '... settlement of the money matters which have been the cause of disturbances affecting the interests of peaceably disposed inhabitants and merchants ...' (4). The Resident lacked the authority, and the resources, to prevent Quaiti

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.33

(2) AIA, Aden News Report No 15 of May 1877

(3) IOL, P & S Vol 5 1877 f 133, Minute of the Pol. Dep.
on Res letter - S of S of 25.9.77. of 24.10.77

(4) AIA 789, Res - Naqib, 31.1.78

aggrandisement. But the change of Resident produced no official change of heart towards Awadh. When a quarrel occurred between the Naqib and his younger brother, Muhammad, Salih Jaffer was sent to reconcile the two Kasadi factions (1). The Residency had no obligation to intervene, but the dispute benefited Awadh and disturbed Mukalla. It was claimed that the dispute between the Naqib and his brother in 1879 was provoked by Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi, then a refugee from Dhufar.(2). It is possible that that dispute arose out of the Seiyid's advice to seek Ottoman help against the Quaiti, when the Naqib placed his reliance on the British. If that was so, Salih Jaffer's intervention is readily understandable. It was designed to eliminate an excuse for Ottoman intervention.

The Resident tried to prevent Awadh visiting Hyderabad in 1878; he believed that Awadh would '... take advantage of the opportunity to strengthen his position

- (1) 'Colonial 123' p.33. The date of this Kasadi family quarrel is given as being after 1877. It appears to have been in 1879 (see note 2)
- (2) FO 78 3615, Res - SGB, 4.2.79

in Arabia by ... the transmission of money if not of warlike stores and men to Shihr in view to an attack being made on the Nakeeb ... in October next ...', when the truce expired (1). The Bombay Government accepted that Awadh's visit was on personal business, for medical treatment in India, to bring his family to Hadhramaut and to '... close finally all relations between him and H.H. [the Nizam]'s Government ...' (2). Permission was granted (2). In April Awadh visited Hyderabad (3).

The Naqib had no doubt that Awadh intended to resume hostilities; the Naqib desperately wanted a settlement or another truce (4). Loch asked Awadh to renew the truce. He also wrote to the Naqib to let him know what was being done. The Arabic translation (5) of Loch's draft to the Naqib was more reassuring than the English

(1) AIA 789, Res - SGB, Jan 1878 (date partly termite-eaten)

(2) AIA 789, Bombay Resolution 1004 of 28.2.1878

(3) AIA 789, Res - SGB, 30.4.78

(4) AIA 789, Naqib - Res, 29.7.78

(5) AIA 789, Res - Naqib, 26.8.78

original (1). It is possible that Salih Jaffer was concerned to reassure the Naqib and to retain the Naqib's trust, rather than to translate Loch's letter accurately. The Naqib knew that his position was desperate. He applied to Seiyid Turki of Oman to mediate: but, as the Seiyid had already quarrelled with Awadh over the latter's treatment of Suri vessels bound for Mukalla (2), Awadh was not likely to, and did not, accept the Seiyid's mediation (3).

Awadh disregarded the ban on hostilities by sea and moved some men by an armed boat flying the Ottoman flag (4); he seized Burum from the small Kasadi garrison by a seaborne landing (5). British naval forces removed the Quaiti vessels from the area (4), but Awadh's men

(1) AIA 789 f 23

(2) Sur was an Omani port whose sailors traded to Aden, Africa and the Persian Gulf

(3) BSC Vol III 1878 f 485, Res - SGB, 22.12.78

(4) PRO Admlty 53/11328 Log of H.M.S. Vulture, 1880/81

(5) AAR, AIA 853, 1880/81 para 25

remained in possession of the village 6 miles west of Mukalla across the bay. Salih Jaffer was sent to Mukalla in December, 1880, '... to ascertain personally the present state of affairs [and] to temporize with the Chiefs to prevent hostilities taking place ...' (1), until definite instructions were received from the Foreign Department (2). The chiefs and the local population would also probably express themselves more freely to the Resident's Native Assistant than they would to a European (3). Salih Jaffer still retained some influence over the Naqib; and Loch's aim was to ensure that the Naqib did not, in despair, hand over his territory to the Ottomans, or to the Kathir.

Salih Jaffer was convinced that the Naqib would not hand over his territory to Awadh But Salih believed that the Naqib would repay the ~~£~~MT 80,000, which Awadh

(1) AIA 827, Res - SGB, 29.11.80

(2) p.4.82 n. 2 *None came.*

(3) Cf. IOL, File 758/1908, Off^g Res - SGB on the role of the Native Assistant as he saw it on 10.5.1903

had paid him in 1873, by instalments (1). The Naqib wrote to the Resident that he would hand over authority to any Power, or tribe, that could protect his territory from Awadh (2). The strengthened natural defences to Mukalla prevented Awadh's forces occupying it by land in 1880 (3). The presence of H.M.S. 'Seagull' from 1881 prevented a seaborne assault, or blockade. Official policy firmly supported a ban on maritime warfare, which was enforced by the Royal Navy in 1881 (4). It is possible that the purpose of the ban was to reduce excuses for foreign intervention in an area where the Foreign Department wanted no land commitments. The Ottomans in effect claimed all Arabian ports bar Aden by levying double port dues on vessels arriving at Basra from 'Ottoman' ports in Arabia which had not already paid port dues on departure (5).

(1) See p.4.34^{above}

(2) AIA 827, Naqib - Res, 14.12.80

(3) AIA 726 f 419 is a sketch by Salih Jaffer of the N.W. approaches to Mukalla showing the guns and posts on hills overlooking the approaches

(4) AIA 827, SGB - Res, tel. of 8.12.80

(5) Kelly 'Gulf' p.808

The presence of an R.N. vessel was a deterrent to any foreign naval negotiations with the Naqib, as well as being some reassurance to him. Loch had managed to secure an R.N. vessel off Mukalla by stressing the danger of the Ottomans securing a foothold at Mukalla through the Naqib accepting Ottoman suzerainty (1). Loch, wrongly, imagined that, once established at Mukalla, the Ottomans could move northwards where they would meet '... the [Ottoman] expeditions which are slowly but surely sweeping from Yemen eastwards towards Oman ...' (1). In Loch's truthful view the British had, secretly, 'thrown the Naqib over' - which justified the Naqib seeking another protector (1). Salih Jaffer succeeded in preventing the Naqib turning to the Porte for help until too late. Loch was no longer concerned to preserve the Naqib; he was concerned that no harm should come to the 50-odd British Indians at Mukalla. Loch did not want the town stormed and looted (2); he wanted a peaceable transfer of power. The Naqib, however, refused a truce, which

(1) AIA 827, Res - SGB, 29.11.80

(2) Note by Loch on Naqib's letter received 1.12.80

Awadh was willing to agree to at Salih Jaffer's request in December, 1880. The Kathir were then coming to the Naqib's help; and, in the event of a truce, the Naqib would either have to entertain and provision the Kathir, or pay them for their trouble in making a diversion in his favour. He could afford neither provisions nor payment (1).

Loch was reluctant to leave events to take their course; but he had little room for manoeuvre. The R.N. vessels off Mukalla were not under his command; and he was not allowed to use troops ashore. He had little left to use but bluff and the skill of Salih Jaffer in managing the Naqib. Loch wished to prevent the Naqib handing Mukalla to the Kathir; he believed that that would perpetuate the insecurity on the coast. He did not believe that the Kathir could maintain themselves at Mukalla, so far from their tribal area, with Awadh's forces threatening their communications. The Kathir would then be obliged to call on the Ottomans for assistance, and to acknowledge Ottoman suzerainty.

(1) AIA 827, Salih Jaffer's Report - Res of Dec 1880

The Bombay Secretariat optimistically believed that '... some equitable settlement of the points in dispute ...' might still be possible in August, 1881 (1). Loch therefore brought the Naqib to Aden for discussions and tried to arrange a settlement. Loch could not occupy Mukalla as the Naqib wanted; the Naqib could not refund Awadh MT£80,000 and would not agree to sell a part of his territory for ~~£~~MT220,000, or all of it for ~~£~~MT300,000. The Naqib returned to Mukalla and the situation remained unchanged. Even the British Indians refused to co-operate and be evacuated to safety in Aden, leaving their business interests behind. Nor did the Kathiri diversion materially aid the Naqib. The Kathir were '... badly armed with old matchlocks and without cannon of any kind ...' (2). Each man brought '... his own arms, ammunition and food such as it ...' was (2).

Naqib Umar bin Salih appealed as an Ottoman subject to the Ottoman authorities in the Hejaz for assistance some time during the summer of 1881; he complained of

(1) AIA 853, B° Res 3696 of 8.8.81, copied - Res

(2) AIA 827, Res - SGB, 16.12.80

British measures designed to coerce him into accepting a settlement (1). The Porte enquired if the facts were true and asked, if they were, that the British Government would instruct the Resident to cease his interference in Hadhrami affairs. The Foreign Office sought the India Office's advice. After 9 years of incidents on the 'independent' coast of Hadhramaut, it might have been expected that the Foreign Office would have been better informed than they were by the India Office, considering the Ottoman interest in all Arabia. Lord Granville had no intention of discussing Ottoman claims in Arabia in an exchange of diplomatic notes. He instructed that Musurus Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador, should be given a verbal reply (2). The India Office had replied '... that these people have been fighting, that the Aden Authorities arbitrated, that the Mukulla Chief accepted the Aden decision, and then backed out of it, and that it is intended at a convenient season to enforce that decision ...'.

(1) FO 78 3615, Note of protest presented by Ottoman Ambassador - FO 25.8.81

(2) FO 78 3615, Undated note on the file

Britain '... did not recognize the suzerainty of the Porte over Makulla ...' (1).

The India Office synopsis did not coincide very accurately with the facts. The Foreign Department had insisted that arbitration would have to be accepted voluntarily by both parties to the dispute. Indeed, Loch was criticised by the Foreign Department, within a few weeks, because force was used to impose a solution. It is possible that the close naval boat blockade of Mukalla (2), after the Naqib's return from Aden in 1881, was enforced because of apprehension in the Aden Residency that the Naqib would transfer Mukalla to the Porte, rather than hand it over to Awadh bin Umar. Such apprehension appears to have been fully justified.

Major Hunter returned to Mukalla with the Naqib and Salih Jaffer after fruitless discussions in Aden. Awadh had secured Mukalla's virtual isolation by bribing the Akabirah (3) and Bani Hassan (4) tribes in 1880 (5).

(1) FO 78 3615, U/S IO - U/S FO, 10.9.81

(2) PRO Admlty 53 12152, Log of HMS Arab 20.10-5.11.81

(3) Belonging to the Nuwa Confederation stretching westwards from Mukalla to W. Hajr

(4) Belonging to the Seiban Confederation

(5) AIA 827, Naqib - Res, 28.8.80

Mukalla could not hold out indefinitely, without access to local supplies by land. Supplies would continue to come in by sea, and the population was largely dependent upon fish and imported dates, but the main agricultural areas were outside the Naqib's control, north and east of his outpost at Harshiyat. Loch did not give Hunter 'precise' instructions before sending him to Mukalla (1). But he had not been to Mukalla himself. He had exhausted all possibilities of a negotiated settlement and he was only concerned for the security of the British Indians. Some of these claimed that the Naqib would not allow them to leave Mukalla once Hunter had left. The Naqib only needed to forbid local shipping to take them as passengers, and they had to remain as the Naqib's hostages against a Quaiti assault.

Hunter's instructions from Loch were apparently not specific (2); but the senior naval officer, Commander Hulton, R.N., had been asked by Loch to assist Hunter. Hunter's solution, with Hulton's co-operation, was to seize Mukalla more by the threat of force than its actual

(1) AIA 881, Ag SGB - Res, 2.1.82, criticising Loch

(2) There is no copy in the Aden file

use. Little was needed. Altogether four British sailors were killed in operations at Mukalla and Burum in 1881 (1). Local casualties were not detailed. But sufficient force was used to show the Naqib that resistance was hopeless. He handed over his forts and the town to H.M.S. 'Dragon' and sailed into exile in Zanzibar with some of his followers. Mukalla was then handed over peaceably to Awadh. The Foreign Department noted that the unauthorised, and unorthodox, solution had resulted in a 'speedy and complete' settlement (2). It was therefore politic to turn a blind eye to the Residency's disregard of official policy and '... unnecessary to take any further notice of this matter ...'. In the absence of any copy of Loch's orders to Hunter it is impossible to assess the extent to which Hunter and Cmdr. Hulton disregarded the Resident's instructions. The action probably increased British prestige in the area.

(1) AIA 949 f 23, Report by Cmdr Hulton, R.N.,
October 1881

(2) AIA 881, Sec For.Dept. - SGB, 11.7.82

Awadh bin Umar's control of both Shihr and Mukalla offered him the opportunity of applying pressure to the more heavily populated parts of Inner Hadhramaut. Shihr and Mukalla dominated Hadhramaut's overseas trade, and influenced Hadhramis' lives. Awadh could make the sea-borne shipment of foreign arms to hostile factions very difficult and expensive, if not impossible. He could thus establish a near-monopoly in the use of the more modern weapons. In addition, he secured control over a major local export, Hadhrami emigrants, and over a wealthy import, successful Hadhramis returning home. Hadhramis' wealth abroad financed much of Hadhramaut's food imports, on which some of the population lived during part of the year. Those imports yielded revenue through import taxes: and the population's partial dependence on imported foodstuffs gave Awadh a useful political bargaining counter with the tribal confederations. Awadh controlled the coastal towns with their stocks of imported grain and their access to overseas sources. He did not control the tribal areas outside the towns and villages.

The Government of Bombay approved a draft treaty to bind Awadh bin Umar closer to Britain in March,

1882 (1). The treaty reduced Awadh's room for independent manoeuvre just when Sultan Abdul Hamid was resentful of the British exercise of influence at Mukalla (2).

Awadh showed no enthusiasm at the prospect of closer links with Britain and the Aden Residency (3). He did not send an Agent to collect the draft. In August, Salih Jaffer suggested, in reply to a query by Hunter, that an officer from the Residency should deliver the draft (4). Awadh bin Umar was apparently more interested to hear news of the Egyptian Urabi Pasha's fight against the British (5). It is probable that Awadh still felt insecure. He had not disposed of the Kathir. The latter complained to the Resident by letter that roads in the interior were blocked. But as Hunter noted to the Resident, on the Kathiri letter of complaint, Awadh had no control over

(1) AIA 881, Ag SGB - Res, 15.3.82

(2) FO 78 5387, Lord Dufferin HBM Amb C'ple - FO 14.3.82

(3) Aitchison's Treaties No LXX

(4) AIA 881, Salih Jaffer - Hunter in reply to Hunter's note of 24.8.82

(5) AIA 881, Hunter - Blair, no date. Probably Aug '82

the tribal confederations between the interior and the coast. By disbanding many of his tribal mercenaries Awadh had probably contributed to the insecurity (1). The new Resident, General James Blair, V.C., minuted '... request [Awadh] to be civil to the Katheeri and to open all roads ...'. Blair had only arrived in March and had no previous experience of the area. He sent a new and inexperienced Assistant, Mr. L.P. Walsh, with Salih Jaffer, to visit Shihr in the autumn (1).

Conditions inland remained unsettled, probably because the tribal population needed time to readjust their pattern of life to the changed circumstances. The Kathir remained discontented. The Hamum, living north and east of Shihr, were restive. Their caravan traffic to the Kathiri eastern section of the Wadi Hadhramaut had possibly not recovered and Quaiti subsidies to mercenaries had ceased. In October, 1882, Abdullah bin Umar (2) reported that 'beduin' in the Quseiar area would '... have to suffer for their wrongdoings ...'. Quseiar

(1) AIA 881 f 197, Report of Mr. Walsh and Salih Jaffer on Hadhramaut

(2) He was the nominal ruler and Awadh's eldest brother

was within the Hamumi area. Abdullah complained that fishing canoes had been burnt and '... the poor and helpless plundered ...'. It is possible that the Quaitis were expanding wherever they could obtain control of new tax-sources. Fishermen on the Hadhramaut coast were not tribesmen. Customarily, they paid a tithe of their catch to the local tribesmen. The Quseiar area has rich, seasonal, sardine and king-fish catches which start at the beginning of the north-east monsoon. It is possible that the Hamum resented the new Quaiti presence in the area and burnt the unarmed fishermen's boats in a customary gesture of defiance, to show that the Quaiti could not protect them as a tribal suzerain should. It was a slight on Awadh bin AbdAllah, and a convincing reason for the fishermen to scrape together a second customary tithe to the bedouin.

AbdAllah bin Salih, the Kathiri leader, visited Aden in December, 1883, to try to persuade the Resident to remain neutral while the Kathir recovered Shihr and Mukalla (1). The Resident's reply was equivocal. The

(1) AIA 949, Res - SGB, 31.12.83

British would not forbid him to take action '... nor do we promise to assist you ... nor to abstain ourselves from assisting the Jemadar if necessary ...' (1). Blair was at a loss to know what to do. He knew little about the Kathir and their territory (2). The Resident was not allowed to call upon R.N. vessels for naval assistance without Bombay's permission. The Kathiri leader's visit had not been anticipated. Blair was possibly impressed by Salih Jaffer's estimate of 7,000 fighting men amongst the Kathir, and he had no means of restraining their actions inland. Blair, in his dilemma, asked that he '... should be early put in possession of the views of Government so that the policy to be observed may be definite ...' (3). Meantime, Abdullah bin Salih departed by the mail steamer for Zanzibar to try and obtain financial support from the Kasadi Naqib.

The Foreign Department were no less uncertain what

(1) AIA 949, Res - SGB, 31.12.83

(2) AIA 949 f 53, Salih Jaffer wrote a rather inaccurate report on the Kathir apparently based on information collected in Aden

(3) AIA 949, Res - SGB, 31.12.83

to do: it is possible that they may have considered the events of October, 1881, in Mukalla, and decided that they preferred to wait until the situation developed further. British interests were best served by peace and the ever elusive stability, so a telegram was sent to the Resident in February, before the Kathiri leader returned from Zanzibar, telling Blair to warn the Kathir that an attack on the Quaiti '... would be viewed with grave displeasure ... If necessary a gunboat may be sent ...'. But the Foreign Department did not make clear that Blair was not himself to decide when to send a warship to Shihr (1). Abdullah was warned on his empty-handed return from Zanzibar that the British wanted no resumption of hostilities and might intervene in support of the established authority of Awadh bin Umar (2). The Foreign Department expressed their doubts realistically and pointed out that their policy might be changed if Awadh did not accept the Resident's advice. They were '... most reluctant to interfere in quarrels ... between the Arab

(1) AIA 949, Sec For.Dept. - SGB, 28.2.84

(2) AIA 949 f 71, Res - SGB, 8.3.84

tribes but ... having regard to the peculiar circumstances of Shihr and Makulla ... think it desirable in the present instance to support the Kaiti chief against unprovoked aggression so long as he conforms to the advice given ...' to him (1). Their letter was cautious and full of qualifications. It gave little guidance to Blair and showed no understanding of politics in Hadhramaut. The Foreign Department was in unfamiliar waters and the Resident, General Blair, was an inadequate pilot.

Rumours from Hadhramaut suggested that the Kathir might attack Shihr. In May, 1884, Blair asked the Senior Naval Officer, Red Sea Area, to make a vessel available to take his Assistant, Captain King, to Shihr. King sailed in H.M.S. 'Woodlark', on what was to be a formal demonstration of British support for the Quaitis. A notice was read out, and pinned up, in the centre of Shihr, in King's presence, announcing the British intention to protect Mukalla and Shihr, and the 'dependencies' of these two ports (2). British records give no indication of the

(1) AIA 949, Sec For.Dept. - SGB, 28.2.84

(2) AIA 949, Captain King's Report - Res, May 1884

local reaction. It is possible that some Hadhramis believed that British forces might be landed. The Hadhramis were not to know that the Foreign Department would not have allowed that. It is possible that the Kathir were deterred: they made no attack. Popular feeling, at least in Mukalla, was unfavourable to Awadh. The Quaiti Governor there believed that '... the population ... are for the most part in favour of the Kathiris; and if the latter attacked the town with any prospect of success the inhabitants would probably assist the invaders ...'. Since the Quaiti chiefs soon came to '... consider their Hadhramaut possessions as a private estate ...', local opposition was understandable (1).

Blair's action, however, was considered to have been unauthorised; in the Foreign Department's view he should not have asked directly for H.M.S. 'Woodlark'. Instead, '... a fresh and formal requisition from the Viceroy ...' should have been made to the Naval Commander in Indian waters (2). But quick action seemed necessary. Blair

(1) 'Colonial 123' p.82

(2) AIA 949, Ag SGB - Res, 11.10.84

and his staff believed in the possibility of an Ottoman intervention in Hadhramaut during 1884 (1). The Ottoman authorities at the Porte and in Sanaa did consider intervention, but it never materialised (2). The Ottoman Navy was not used to establish a permanent Ottoman base in the area. Possibly that was partly because the continuing Zaidi opposition in the Yemen prevented an Ottoman expansion eastwards, overland. The Ottoman authorities in the Yemen, however, continued to claim that the populations of Shihr and of Mukalla were Ottoman subjects (3). But the Porte discouraged a Hadhrami applicant visiting Constantinople from hoping for an Ottoman protectorate in 1886. He was only described as '...a Sheikh named Abu Bakr from Mukalla...'. Baring, in Cairo, advised Abu Bakr to apply for British protection while passing through Aden (4). There is no evidence that his advice was followed. The Viceroy, Lord Dufferin,

(1) BSC 81/84 f 1117, Offg Res of 6.8.84 - S of S

(2) AIA 972 Copy of Correspondence from Grand Vizier to Gov. Gen. of the Yemen of July 1884. (Also B.S.C. 1881/84 f 1117 para. 6, Officiating Resident, Aden to S of S 6.8.84.)

(3) PRO FO 195/2456/84, IO Memo - FO, P5094A of 29.12.13

(4) FO 78 4077, Tel. Consul-General Cairo - Viceroy of 5.7.86, reported to FO, and letter Consul-General - FO, 11.7.86.

however, proposed that 'moderate subsidies' and 'agreements' should be arranged for the coastal tribes between Britain's Yemeni stipendiaries and Muscat, such as the Quaiti already had. The India Office agreed that such a move would be 'expedient' to prevent the 'very inconvenient' intrusion of any Foreign Powers (1). But Hunter proposed that these treaties should give Britain justification for intervening, if required, but would not impose any such obligations. '... Arab Chieftains are rather given to divesting themselves of their allegiances as readily as of their possessions for a consideration ...'. Bertie suggested that there should be a binding obligation, '... so long as the treaty chiefs ... took British advice, in order to deter Foreign Powers from bribing the Chiefs ...' (1).

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(1) FO 78 3974, FO Memo by F.L. Bertie, referring to letter IO - FO, 15.9.86

Awadh bin Umar's assumption of sole power

The Quaiti family established their position securely between 1884 and Awadh bin Umar's death in 1909. It is probable that the local conviction that he had British support, regardless of whether he was at fault, helped to strengthen Awadh's position (1). Britain entered into Protectorate Treaties with the coastal tribes from the limits of Ras Sair in Oman, eastwards, between 1887 and 1890. The purpose was to prevent the establishment of any foreign base on the coast, without British permission (2). A further Anglo-Quaiti Agreement was concluded on 1st May 1888 and ratified on 26th February, 1890 (3). Like other such agreements it forbade the transfer of sovereignty over any Quaiti territory to a foreign power without British agreement.

- (1) The Quaiti Naib of Mukalla, Ahmad ba Surra, grandson of the late 19th century Saiban tribal leader, and Quaiti enemy, of Duan, in January 1958, to the writer
- (2) FO 78 3974, FO Memo of 2.10.86
- (3) Aitchison's Treaties (1933 edn) LXXI

The draft agreement was signed by Abdullah bin Umar, Awadh's co-ruler from Shibain~~m~~. It is recorded as being signed at Mukalla, but the ship's log shows that the Resident paid only a hurried visit to Shihr, arriving at 4.30 p.m. on 1st May. Mukalla was visited again briefly on 4th May (1).

Abdullah died in 1888, and the Resident recognised his son, Hus~~s~~ain, as Governor of Shibain (2). That recognition was not to Awadh bin Umar's taste. He had no wish to share power with any of his nephews. There was no longer any political benefit for Awadh in having a co-ruler in Shibain~~m~~, and inaccessible to the British, as there had been between 1867 and 1881. From 1882, Awadh was bound by treaty to the British. Thenceforward, his position as a treaty chief made Britain support him. Hus~~s~~ain was not a treaty chief. Britain had therefore a vested interest in maintaining Awadh in sole power. Hus~~s~~ain bin Abdullah was disinherited and so were Awadh's other nephews. But the British declined to guarantee the succession to Awadh's son, Ghalib. British interest was

(1) Adm 53 13019, Log of H.M.S. 'Osprey'

(2) AIA 1052, AAR 1889/90 p.12

restricted to keeping out other powers from Hadhramaut,
not to underwriting the succession of possibly unsuitable
individuals.

Section 5. Aden Residency Relations with Socotra
 and Dhofar
 1865 - 1886

Socotra lies just under 600 miles E.S.E. of Aden, 220 miles S.S.E. from the Arabian coast at Ras Fartak, and under 150 miles east of Cape Guardafui on the Somali Coast. Geographically, the island may be considered as an extension of the Horn of Africa; linguistically, the Socotri language is related to Mahri; and politically, the islanders had been dominated by the Mahri chief of Qishn and Seihut by force since the late 17th century. The island is 75 miles long and less than 50 broad at its widest point. A mountain range rises to 3000' inland. The island appeared, on a map, to be a desirable strategic base.

There were only two poor anchorages; one provided some shelter from the N.E., and the other from the S.W., monsoon. In practice, from May to September, the island was inaccessible to local shipping and dangerous even for steamers because of high winds and high seas. It was also fever-ridden. It is probable that dhows passing

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between the Persian Gulf and the East African Coast carried the malarial mosquito vectors in their water supplies and bilges. These were some of the reasons why the British and other foreign powers had made no use of the island after the British left in 1835 (1).

Socotra was occasionally visited by British or Foreign naval vessels before the Suez Canal was opened. Lieutenant C.J. Cruttenden, I.N., Capt. S.B. Haines' Assistant at Aden, visited it several times. In January, 1857, the Austrian Government was reported to be interested in occupying the island (2). But, despite the presence of an Austrian corvette in the area, the island was not annexed. Next came reports of French commercial interest from the British Ambassador at Constantinople (3). He reported that Socotra belonged to an Arab chief. The Foreign Office either then accepted Ottoman suzerainty over all Arabia, and so over Socotra's chief, or believed that the island was Ottoman territory. A cypher wire went

(1) Waterfield 'Aden' p.21-23

(2) AF 193 Res - SGB, 20.1.57

(3) FO 78 3186, Sir Henry Bulwer tel. - FO, 11.5.59

to Bulwer by return; - 'Make the Porte refuse the island' (1). The Ottoman Foreign Minister, Fuad Pasha, was willing to oblige Britain, if the Porte 'turned out' to have jurisdiction, but Fuad Pasha doubted that possibility, believing that the island belonged to the Imam of Muscat. That statement was important because no Ottoman claims to S.E. Arabia, or at least to Muscat, were made. More accurate information was forthcoming from Muscat; the island belonged to '... the Sultan of Kisseen [Qishn] ...' (2). The India Office arranged that the Aden Resident should take steps '... to prevent the proprietor from selling it to the French ...' (3).

In 1871, the Italian Ambassador in London informed the Foreign Office of Italian interest in acquiring Socotra as a penal station, providing Britain had no objection. The Foreign Office expressed very strong objections with unconcealed petulance. The Italian Government considerably shelved the project without

(1) FO 78 3186, FO Cypher of 12.5.59 - Bulwer

(2) FO 78 3186, FO Cypher of 9.7.59 - Bulwer

(3) FO 78 3186, FO Cypher of 12.7.59 - Bulwer

further comment. The Resident at Aden, an Engineer Officer (1), commented that the island was destitute of any natural harbour, but that the Italians might be able to build an artificial harbour with convict labour. In his view, some such facilities for reliable sea-communications would be mandatory, and, once built, would provide a 'rendez-vous' for a naval squadron at the entrance to the Gulf of Aden and astride British communications to India. His opinion that an Italian occupation was 'unadvisable' probably reflected contemporary official Indian opinion. Sir Bartle Frere admitted that Britain had no justification for objecting to an Italian occupation (2).

The opening of the Suez Canal greatly increased the shipping passing through the Gulf of Aden, bringing added chances of wrecks in Socotran waters, and more occasions for foreign intervention to protect shipwrecked crews, passengers and cargoes (3). In 1872, H.M.S. 'Briton'

(1) AIA 560, Res - SGB, 26.10.71

(2) AIA 644 f82, IO Memo of 1874 forwarded to Aden 16.11.74

(3) AIA 575 f221, Statement of Master of s.s. 'Isa'

rescued the crews of two British wrecks in Socotran waters. It was becoming increasingly plain that some direct foreign intervention in Socotra was inevitable. But the Foreign Department had recently opposed an extension of British influence in the Yemen (1).

A new policy of limited intervention in the Yemen was applied by the Foreign Department with British Government support in 1873 (2). In 1873, the Aden Resident was concerned that the Ottomans might intervene in the fighting in the Hadhramaut (3). The increasing Egyptian interest on the Somali Coast since 1869 was a further cause for Aden Residency suspicion of all Ottoman activities in the Gulf of Aden (4). Brigadier J.W. Schneider viewed the visit of an Ottoman naval training ship to Socotra in 1874 with acute suspicion. He suggested that future foreign intervention in the island should be prevented by purchasing a suitable agreement by arrangement with

(1) p.2.67 n.3

(2) p.3.73 n.2

(3) p.4.32 - 4.33

(4) p.6.8 - 6.17

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the island's chief (1). An attempt to visit the islanders in December, 1874, was foiled by rough weather; and the despatch of an invitation to the Socotran chief, in a bottle, to visit Aden was unproductive. The islanders denied that the bottle and its message reached them (2). When another invitation was delivered, the reply was polite but evasive. Socotra had no connection with the Resident; but '... the Sultan of Room was prayed for every Friday ...' in the Tamarida mosque. Their reply read that '... meeting and conversation [in Aden] will take place when God [will] be pleased ...' to approve that (3). Plainly, if the British required ^{an} agreement, the Resident would have to fetch it.

Schneider had proposed that the chief should agree '... never to cede, sell, mortgage, or give for occupation ... Socotra or any of its island dependencies ...'. That was amended at the India Office by the addition of '... without the permission of the British Government ...'(4).

(1) IOL P&S 1875 f637, Res - SGB, 25.11.75

(2) P & S 1875, Res - SGB, 25.11.75 refers

(3) P & S 1875, Sultan in reply to Res - Sultan of 8.8.75

(4) IOL P & S 1875 f659, note by Under Sec. IO.

The amendment ensured that Britain alone decided whether Britain, or any other country, might acquire territory. A peculiarity of the engagement was that the Chief's mainland, Mahra Coast, territory was not covered by the agreement (1). The India Office were reluctant '... to acquire absolute possession of the island ...' (2); and the Government of Bombay was even opposed to the limited involvement of the new Treaty. The Chief's mainland territory was not even mentioned in writing in the Agreement of 1886 (3).

The Bombay Government's caution in 1875 was realistic: Schneider knew little about Socotra, or its Mahri overlord. Schneider's success in thwarting Ottoman ambitions near Aden in 1873 had encouraged him to propose intervention in the Hadhramaut for the same reason. His agreement for intervention in Socotra was similarly negative. Britain had no positive use for Socotra. But the India Office was impressed by Schneider's arguments. The Secretary of State

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXIII of 23.1.76

(2) P & S 1875 f641, Sec.For.Dept. - SGB quoting from the S of S of 23.4.75 - G of I

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXIV

wired to the Viceroy on 10th January, 1876;...'Letter from Aden Resident to Bombay No. 190 of 1875. Lose no time in concluding negotiations about Socotra (1)...'Three days later the Resident received orders to act without delay; he sailed from Aden for Socotra on 17th January aboard H.M.S. 'Briton'. He arrived off Tamarida on the 21st, found that he could obtain nothing at Socotra, and weighed anchor for Qishn. He arrived there on the 23rd and obtained an agreement on the same day from Ali bin Abdullah bin Salim bin Afreer.

The official account suggests a possible reluctance by the Mahri leaders for any negotiations. The chief's nephew at Tamarida '... manifested great alarm at the arrival of H.M.S. Briton and he declined to come on board at once ...'. He came later with the Residency Interpreter, '... after some trouble and delay ...' (2). Schneider assured Socotra's chief at Qishn that the British '... mission was to prevent the country ... being taken from him [Ali bin Abdullah] or from passing into the hands of any foreign power, save Great Britain ...' (2).

(1) FO 78 3189, correspondence passed by IO - FO, 1.3.76

(2) LA . . . , Res - Sec.For.Dept., 1.2.76

It was also to make arrangements for dealing with future wrecks in Socotran waters. Schneider assured Ali bin Abdullah that his own position would be strengthened against foreign intervention by the proposed treaty. Schneider gave no definition of what intervention was 'foreign'. It appears that he gave that assurance to secure the agreement, as Sir Bartle Frere had possibly made a similar loose and unauthorised assurance to the Kasadi Naqib in 1873 to obtain a new anti-slave trade treaty, and so to keep Ottoman influence out (1). The Captain of H.M.S. 'Briton' confirms that the Mahri chief and his relatives '... declared that they would not sell or part with any portion of their land ...' (2). Clearly the Mahra did not consider that they were giving the British any rights on Socotra (3). But it is possible that the negotiations were not easy, even with the imposing

(1) p.4.42 n.3

(2) PRO FO 78 3189 f53, Report of Capt., H.M.S. Briton of 2.2.76 - C in C, E Indies, forwarded by Admiralty to FO

(3) L/P&S/9/53 f43-45, The treaty agreement

presence of H.M.S. Briton, and that the chief negotiator, Salih Jaffer, needed to use a careful mixture of threats and blandishments. Schneider referred to Salih's '... great tact and ability in carrying out the negotiations [sic] ...'. Certainly, the expenditure of MT\$ 4010 in cash and presents helped to secure the 'very satisfactory' conclusion to the visit (1). The annual stipend was fixed at MT\$ 360.

Once the limited British objective in Socotra had been secured there was little further official interest in the island. It was visited again in April 1876, when Tamarida was provided with a flag-staff and a Union Jack to emphasize to foreign vessels that the island was under British protection. Another visit was paid in 1877. In 1878, the new Resident, Major General F.A.E. Loch, provided two barrels of gunpowder as an additional present with the annual stipend (2). The 1879 stipend was delayed until 1880 when the Captain of H.M.S. 'Seagull' took it (3). The island was then visited by the botanist, Professor Balfour

(1) L/P&S/9/53, Minute of Under Sec. of 1.3.76 on
Schneider's Report

(2) AIA 831, Res - SGB, 24.4.78

(3) AIA 831 f183

of Glasgow University.

In March, 1886, as part of the new British policy of securing the coast of the Gulf of Aden from other foreign intervention, the Resident was instructed to arrange that the Sultan of Socotra placed himself and his successors under British protection as the Somali coastal tribes, excluding the Mijjertain, had done (1). The new Protectorate Treaty was concluded on 23rd March 1886 (2). The Mahri Sultan required assurance, first, that the British would not actually take possession of Socotra or of any of its island dependencies. A verbal, but not a written, assurance was given (3). Thereafter no further interest was taken in its affairs. The Mahri chief had been reluctant to agree to a Protectorate Treaty for Socotra without equivalent guarantee for his mainland territory. That, the Resident's second Assistant,

(1) BSC 85/88, Tel. from SGB - Res, 31.3.86, as required by S of S

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No. LXXIV

(3) FO 78 3974, Report of Capt. Sealey, 28.4.86, passed by IO - FO, 21.5.86

Capt. C.W.H. Sealey, was not authorised to give.

Consideration of the Chief's request was promised, but he received no guarantee (1). Such a guarantee might have led to British intervention against the Omanis or against the Quaitis. German interests had been kept out; and Socotra was '... absorbed silently into the British Empire ...', since, as an island not part of Africa, Britain was not obliged to inform other countries (2).

Probably pressure was applied to get this agreement from the Sultan. Captain Sealey's report admits that the Sultan's Agent at Socotra was reluctant to make any new commitment and unwilling to proceed at once to Qishn. The report also suggests that the Mahri Sultan did not wish to sign a new treaty. It is possible that his earlier insistence on British protection for his mainland territories, as a quid pro quo for an agreement on Socotra, was believed to be a polite way of refusing the British demands. The British behaviour at Socotra was not conciliatory. H.M.S. Dragon exercised the ship's company in gundrill, firing

(1) LI, For.Dept.Despatch 136 - S of S of 6.8.86

(2) FO 78 3974, correspondence Permanent U/S FO and

For.Sec. Lord Rosebery c.25.4 [sic 5] 86

over forty rounds, and in musketry, the morning she arrived. 500 rounds were fired from the Gatling Gun and 420 rounds of pistol practice was fired (1). Similar drill was carried out at Qishn on arrival, with the addition of exploding an underwater 'observation mine' (2). Since practice drills were unusual more than once a quarter, this was calculated sabre-rattling. When the Resident later visited Qishn no salute was even fired (3).

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DHOFAR

Dhofar is bounded by the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on the west, and by Oman on the east. A range of mountains, twenty to forty miles deep and 3000 feet high, run for 200 miles along the coast. These mountains cause heavy rainfall during the S.W. monsoon,

- (1) Adm.53/12366, Log of H.M.S. 'Dragon', 19-21.4.86
- (2) Adm.53/12366, Log of H.M.S. 'Dragon', 22.4.86
- (3) Adm.53/13022, Log of H.M.S. 'Osprey', 2.5.88 4 p.m.

giving the coastal area plentiful water and vegetation. North of the mountains is steppe country, stretching up to the Rub al Khali desert. The coastal inhabitants are the Kathir on the plain and the Qara in the mountains with the Rashid in the steppe and desert to the north. Mahri tribesmen, who live in both the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and in Dhofar, spread far into Dhofar from the coast to the desert. Mahri is widely spoken by the Kathir as well as the Mahra. The Qara have their own language. Arabic is widely understood too.

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The Aden Residency and Dhofar 1875-1886

The Indian authorities on the Malabar Coast had outlawed a certain Seiyid Fadhl bin Alawi in 1852 for creating disturbances amongst the Muslims of the area (1). The Seiyid had settled in Mecca. In 1873 he travelled from Jeddah to Hodeida aboard an Ottoman warship, to visit Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha, the new Ottoman Governor of the

(1) Kelly 'Gulf' p.773

Yemen (1). The Pasha had already told a Kathiri emissary that he intended to place Seiyid Fadhl in charge of Hadhramaut and of Dhofar (2). In 1875, the Seiyid moved to Dhofar at the invitation of a delegation of Dhofaris, who hoped that he would reconcile Dhofar's internal divisions. The Seiyid's arrival made Seiyid Turki, the uncertain ruler of neighbouring, anarchical, Oman, apprehensive that a more effective, expanding, Ottoman presence might follow (3). Seiyid Turki therefore claimed to the British Agent in Muscat that Oman had prior rights to Dhofar. Seiyid Turki wished to eject Seiyid Fadhl. The Omani claim was slight. It rested on an alleged, brief, occupation of the principal port of Salala during a troubled period in Dhofar's history in 1829.

Lt. Col. S.B. Miles, the Consul at Muscat, and the Officiating Resident in the Gulf, Lt. Col. W.F. Prideaux,

(1) NP, Frere - Northbrook from Aden, 19.5.73

(2) p.4.37 n.1

(3) FO 78 3615, Seiyid Turki - Lt. Col. Miles, forwarded by Offg.Res.Pers.Gulf - Offg.Sec.For.Dept., dated 15.6.76

initially supported the Omani claim, out of distaste for Seiyid Fadhl and the prospect of increased Ottoman interest in the area. '... The extension of the influence of this dangerous fanatic ... whose aims and views are ... those of an irreconcilable to Christianity and British rule cannot but prove prejudicial to British interests in South Arabia ...' (1). Prideaux's comment may have been influenced by his service in Aden from 1863-72, when successive Residents had an almost obsessive mistrust of Ottoman intentions in South Arabia. But within a year, Prideaux suggested that support for Omani claims on Dhofar should be dropped (2). They '... were not of a very definite character and did not deserve support ...'. It is possible that Prideaux had not changed his views on Seiyid Fadhl and his 'administration', but rather that he was opposed to any additional British commitment on behalf of the ineffective Seiyid Turki.

The Resident at Aden had been concerned (3), in

(1) FO 78 3615, Offg.Res.Pers.Gulf to Offg.Sec.For.

Dept., 5.7.76

(2) FO 78 3615, Offg.Pol.Res.Pers.Gulf - Offg.Sec.For.

Dept., 18.5.77

(3) FO 78 3615, Res.Aden - SGB, 7.2.76 forwarded by

G of I - S of S, 24.3.76

February, 1876, to hear of Seiyid Fadhl's establishment at Dhofar; and his successor remained as concerned about possible developments (1). In February, 1877, Schneider had quoted a local report '... that the people of the country would like to come under the dominion of the Turks, and that he [Fadhl] had asked the Porte to send two steamers there with 500 troops ...' (2). In November, Brigadier F.A.E. Loch, who had succeeded Schneider in May 1877, feared '... the formation of a hot bed of religious fanaticism - strongly imbued with intensely inimical feelings towards the British Government in India ...'. Loch had similar flights of fancy about Ottoman moves through the desert from the Yemen to Hadhramaut (3). But, by January, 1878, Loch had a more realistic view of Seiyid Fadhl's precarious position in Dhofar, supported only by a local fear that rebellion would result in Ottoman troops arriving to

(1) FO 78 3615, Res - SGB, 20.11.77, copied to S of S

(2) FO 78 3615, Res. Aden - SGB, 7.2.76, forwarded by
G of I - S of S, 24.3.76

(3) p.4.76 n.1

support the Seiyid.

The Foreign Department was concerned to prevent any possible Ottoman competition with Britain's casual surveillance of the Hadhramaut coast. '... We consider it undesirable that such claims [as Seiyid Fadhl's] as may be put forward by the Porte or its Agents to dominion over any part of the Hadhramant [sic] coast of Arabia should be recognised ...' (1). Dhofar was not considered locally to be a part of Hadhramaut, but there were historic and tribal connections through the Kathir tribe (2). The critical position of Umar bin Salih alKasadi at Mukalla in 1876 gave the Foreign Department some reason to fear that Ottoman intervention in Dhofar could result in a Kasadi invitation to intervene at Mukalla too. But Ottoman problems in Europe in 1876 made the possibility of intervention appear, in retrospect, to have been unlikely. However, the Foreign Department was also concerned about Muslim attitudes in general, and, in

(1) FO 78 3615, Gov of I despatch of 4.9.76 - S of S.

IO passed the correspondence to FO on 14.10.76

(2) p.4.1 n.3

particular, the capacity of Seiyid Fadhl, outlawed from India, to harm British interests. The Foreign Office labelled their new file (1) on the subject; 'Sayyid Fadhl (or Fazl) bin Alawi the outlawed Mopiah priest in the Hadhramant [sic] Coast of Arabia (Dhafur, Shahr, Makulla and Zaffer)'(2).

Lord Salisbury at the India Office felt that, '... without assuming that Sayyid Fadhl has acted with the knowledge and consent of the Turkish Government, or asserting in any way the claim of Muscat to suzerainty over Dhofar, it is desirable, as suggested by the Government of India, to obtain from the Porte a repudiation of the Sayyid's proceedings ...' (3). Salisbury's aim appears to have been the customary British wish to maintain the 'status quo' along the southern Arabian coast by excluding any foreign influence, which might, subsequently, be in conflict with British interests. It is possible

(1) FO 78 3615

(2) Possibly Yafai

(3) FO 78 3615, U/S IO Louis Malet - U/S FO, quoting Lord Salisbury

that Seiyid Turki's weakness in Oman was a sufficient argument against Britain supporting Omani claims in Dhofar (1). Any British support might have entailed more British liabilities in support of Seiyid Turki's claims. The Foreign Office accepted Lord Salisbury's request and asked Sir Henry Elliot to take action (2). But, despite several reminders, the Porte avoided giving the assurances which Salisbury sought, and which Indian officials at the Foreign Department and in Aden wanted (3). But Seiyid Fadhl's harshness alienated his subjects, who tolerated his presence only from fear that he enjoyed Ottoman support (4).

Seiyid Fadhl was driven out of Dhofar in January, 1879 (5), after vainly appealing (6) for Ottoman assistance

(1) Kelly 'Gulf' p.780-783

(2) FO 78 3615, FO - Elliot, 21.10.76, with copies of the correspondence from Aden and India on Seiyid Fadhl

(3) FO 78 3615, Elliot - FO, 29.11.76, IO - FO enquiring 10.8.77 FO - Sir Henry Layard, who had replaced Elliot 14.8.77

(4) IOL P&S, Res - SGB, 15.1.78

(5) FO 78 3615, Res - SGB, 4.2.79, sent to S of S by G of I despatch of 1.5.79

(6) FO 78 3615, Res Aden - SGB, 3.1.79

from the Yemen. According to secret reports from the Yemen, obtained by the British Ambassador (1), to the Porte, the Governor General gave only a non-committal verbal reply to the Seiyid's Agent. The Pasha knew that the Resident at Aden was concerned that Ottoman influence should not spread into Hadhramaut. In deference to that concern, and possibly because of his own commitments against the Zaidis, he offered no assistance. The Kathiri Shaikh, Awadh bin Abdullah bin Said bin Mubarak AshShanfari, wrote to the Residency Interpreter on 13th January, 1879, to report the welcome news of Seiyid Fadhl's expulsion for 'tyranny' (2).

Seiyid Fadhl had been ousted, but he tried to recover his position in Dhofar by manoeuvres in Constantinople, where he was welcomed by the Sultan's A.D.C. on his arrival (3). Seiyid Fadhl had a reputation

- (1) FO 78 3615, Sir Henry Layard - FO, 18.8.79,
enclosing undated confidential correspondence from
Gov. Gen. of Yemen to the Porte
- (2) FO 78 3615, encl. dated 18 Moharram 1296 with
Res - SGB, 4.2.79
- (3) Kelly 'Gulf' p.775

as a religious savant; and Sultan Abdul Hamid added the Seiyid to his coterie of such men at Constantinople. But the Seiyid thought it prudent to cultivate the acquaintance of the British Ambassador, possibly because he failed to receive hoped-for material assistance from the Sultan (1). On 30th January, 1880, the Seiyid sent an amiable letter, in French, by the hand of his son, to Sir Henry Layard (2). Sir Henry was impressed by Seiyid Fadhl's strikingly handsome son. Seiyid Fadhl visited the Ambassador shortly afterwards. The Seiyid admitted that the Sultan had refused him military assistance, but he still hoped for a loan of £15,000. The Seiyid maintained that he was still the ruler of Dhofar.

Seiyid Fadhl professed to believe that the position of the Ottoman Empire was very precarious; he therefore wished for British friendship, and for British protection for Dhofar if the Ottoman Empire collapsed. Seiyid Fadhl referred to the Sultan as the Caliph, and to the Sultan's

(1) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 12.2.80, reporting on an interview with Seiyid Fadhl

(2) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 6.2.80

Caliphial duties to carry out all the precepts of the Koran. In that, Seiyid Fadhl was echoing the frequently heard local opinion of the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph as the suzerain of all Muslims within the area. Seiyid Fadhl claimed, flatteringly, that the Sultan '... had frequently spoken to him [of Layard] as his true friend, and of England as his best ally ...' (1). There is no evidence that Layard doubted the sincerity of Seiyid Fadhl's assessment, but Layard enquired of the Foreign Office whether he should take steps to prevent the Sultan, or the Porte, encouraging Seiyid Fadhl's return to Dhofar (2).

The India Office had no doubt that Seiyid Fadhl's return would be unwelcome to the Indian Government. Layard was informed accordingly. But he was unable to prevent the Seiyid's return (3). According to Layard, the Sultan's Ministers did not want the Seiyid to return, but the Sultan refused to prevent it. Ottoman opinion was apparently

(1) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 12.2.80

(2) FO 78 3615, FO - IO, 3.3.80 and IO - FO, 12.3.80

(3) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 7.4.80

divided. One school held that Ottoman prestige would suffer if Omani influence was allowed to expand into Dhofar. Opponents of that view held that greater damage to Ottoman prestige could occur if the Sultan assisted Seiyid Fadhl and the British then intervened more effectively on behalf of Oman (1).

Seiyid Fadhl made his own preparations for his return to Dhofar, despite the conflict of opinions at Constantinople. He informed Seiyid Turki in May, 1880, that he would shortly be leaving for Dhofar '... with the orders of the Sublime Porte ...' (2). He planned to travel via the Hejaz but he does not appear to have left until late in 1880 (3). In the Hejaz, too, local opinion was divided about the merits and demerits of the Seiyid's attempted return. Those who were opposed to any increase of Ottoman influence in Arabia believed that a

(1) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 15.5.80

(2) FO 78 3615, Seiyid Fadhl's letter was forwarded in translation by British Agent, Persian Gulf to S of S, 19.7.80

(3) FO 78 3615, Sir H Layard - FO, 15.5.80

renewed attempt on Dhofar would lead to greater Ottoman intervention in Arabia (1), and to a consequent decrease in local leaders' influence. Even personal jealousy altered individual attitudes. Grand Sharif Abu Mutalib of Mecca allegedly changed his support of Seiyid Fadhl into opposition when the Sultan made Seiyid Fadhl a Mushir, a senior Ottoman military rank to the Grand Sharif's own rank (2). In October, 1880, the Grand Sharif had been reported as favouring the Seiyid's plans to recover Dhofar (3).

There was apparent confusion amongst British diplomats as well as amongst Ottoman officials; the new British Ambassador, Mr. G.J. Goschen, apologised to the Foreign Office for giving Seiyid Fadhl formal letters of introduction to the British Consul at Jeddah and to the Resident at Aden (4). Mr Goschen '... was not aware that he [the Seiyid] was an outlaw ...'. The Foreign

(1) FO 78 3615, Layard - FO, 9.4.80

(2) FO 78 3615, Brit.Ambassador C'ple - FO, 8.2.81

(3) FO 78 3615, Brit.Consul Jeddah - FO, 23.10.80

(4) FO 78 3615, Goschen - FO, 22.9.80

Office had no such doubts. Mr. Goschen was instructed that he should '... clearly intimate to the Porte that any active assistance on the part of the Sultan to the Syud, who is an outlaw from British India, would be regarded with great disfavour ...' (1). But the British Embassy remained ill-informed. Lord Dufferin, the new Ambassador, asked in August 1881 about '... the nature of the delinquencies of ... Seiyid Fadhl in India ...' (2). Lord Dufferin's enquiry went unanswered. The Foreign Office's concern was to remove Indian anxieties about the possible future use of the Seiyid by the Ottomans. British attitudes towards the Seiyid were so controversial that they possibly contributed to Ottoman mistrust of, and resentment at, British behaviour, in South Arabia.

In September, 1885, Seiyid Fadhl and his son, Muhammad, arrived at Jeddah from Constantinople. The following January, Muhammad bin Fadhl sailed for Dhofar with 100 ex-Sharifian soldiers and some cases of arms aboard a British pilgrim ship bound for India, via

(1) FO 78 3615, FO - Mr. Goschen, 24.9.80

(2) FO 78 3615, Dufferin - FO, 23.8.81

Dhofar (1). Omani rule in Dhofar was insecure; there was an uprising in 1881; and other revolts followed in 1888 and 1895 (2). The Resident detained the s.s. 'Matapedia' in Aden harbour, on the pretext that the ship had no qualified doctor, as required for pilgrim ships, while asking for orders from Bombay. Instructions were received to search the ship. A quantity of arms were found and removed. Seiyid Muhammad bin Fadhl then claimed to be an Ottoman officer sent to rule Dhofar under the Porte. He declined to land in Dhofar without his arms and disembarked at Aden (3). The precarious Omani presence in Dhofar (4), instituted after Seiyid Fadhl's departure in 1879, was not subsequently challenged by the Seiyid; and the Aden Residency, no longer fearing foreign occupation of the area, showed little interest in Dhofar, which was, henceforward,

(1) BSC 85/86 HBM Consul Jeddah - Res, 7.1.86, sent under flying seal with the Captain of the S.S. 'Matapedia'.

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' (1933 Edn.) p.277 & 280

(3) BSC 85/88 Res (r) S of S, 20.1.86

(4) B. Thomas 'Arabia Felix'. Readers Union edn., London, 1938, p.11.

considered to be the concern of the British Agent in Muscat, and not of the Resident at Aden.

Section 6. The Aden Residency and the African
Coast of the Gulf of Aden, 1865 - 1898

Somali territory stretched from the coastal inlet of Ghubat Kharab, on the Gulf of Tajoura, eastwards to Cape Guardafui and then continued southwards for some 800 miles. The narrow coastal plain facing the Gulf of Aden was backed by a coastal range of hills, with an open plateau behind the hills stretching up to the Abyssinian foothills in the west. The coastal plain provided winter grazing; and the annual fair, at the anchorage of Berbera, attracted tribesmen with trade goods from the whole area. During the hot weather, from April to October, the tribesmen migrated inland.

The Somali tribes were divided into two main divisions; the northern group stretched from roughly Las Khoreh on the Gulf of Aden to Dankali territory bordering Ghubat Kharab. Aden's Somali residents and visitors came mainly from this northern group (1). The Somalis were nomadic pastoralists. Competition over

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.41-42

grazing and water rights was natural. Apart from a few small coastal settlements, the Somalis had no permanent villages, and no agriculture. Date palms were not cultivated. In 1874, '... from the Straits of Bab elMandeb to Ras Hafoon ... these people acknowledge [d] no one man as better than another ...' (1). That judgement was possibly inaccurate; it represented experience of the small coastal anchorages and of Anglo-Somali misunderstandings, when the Somalis had an interest in exaggerating the anarchy. Inter-tribal, and internal tribal, raiding was common.

Between Assab on the Eritrean, Dankali, coast and Cape Guardafui there were few good anchorages. Assab was an excellent anchorage, but there was no permanent population there, and water was scarce. The Dankali village of Tajoura was a port for the shipment of Galla slaves to Arabia. Zeila was a mainly Arab trading town, on the Somali Issa tribe's coast, with a shallow anchorage offshore. Bulhar was another shallow anchorage, unsafe during the summer monsoon, and without a permanent population. Berbera was the main Somali anchorage. Other small anchorages existed in the east. But the area

(1) AIA 644, Memo by Captain F.M. Hunter, 16.12.74, para 2

around Cape Guardafui was treacherous waters during the summer monsoon. The whole coastline of the Gulf of Aden had no permanent rivers. There appeared to be little benefit to any Power in occupying the Somali littoral. Officials at Aden were, however, always concerned at that prospect; but the Government of India would not sanction any British commitment, even at Berbera, that might forestall foreign intervention.

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Aden and the Somali Coast 1839-1865

South Arabia had traditional trading links with the Somali Coast; there were 65 Somalis in Aden when the British occupied it in 1839; and other Somali residents were away at the Berbera fair (1). Aden's total population was then 1,297. Somali livestock and other supplies were particularly valuable to the Aden garrison when they faced early Yemeni blockades. Aden

(1) **AF.I** Details from census returns in the file

became a stable, expanding, market for Somali produce and the main supplier of Somali imports. The Somali population of Aden increased, and there were 5,346 'Africans' - of whom most were Somalis - out of a population of 19,820 at the 1872 census (1).

In 1840, Indian officials were concerned at French moves to develop trade with Abyssinia (2); and Indian naval officers were sent to obtain islands along the African coast which could be used to counter French commercial or political moves. Agreements were made with the local governors of Tajoura (3) and of Zeila (4), which assigned to the British the uninhabited Moussa Islands and Eibat Island respectively. These agreements were of doubtful validity. Tajoura was probably partially dependent on Zeila; and Zeila was a Yemeni dependency (5). But these agreements established a basis for later British claims.

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.159

(2) FO 78 3186, Hertslet's Memo of 5.3.74

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' LXXXV

(4) Aitchison 'Treaties' LXXXVI

(5) AF 147, Res - SGB, 8.11.55. Brig. W. Coghlan thought the Governorates were Yemeni dependencies

Once Ottoman suzerainty was exercised on the Yemen coast from 1848, Yemeni affairs became, through the Porte, a matter for European, rather than for Indian, diplomatic interest. So too did the affairs of Zeila and Tajoura, and the Somali ports. Even before, British concern with the slave trade had led Palmerston, as Foreign Secretary, to authorise the stationing of a warship at Berbera during the 1841/42 trading season, to prevent the export of slaves (1). As early as 1847, the Egyptian Governor of Massawa had ineffectively claimed all the Somali coast in the Khedive's name (2). Later, Egyptian visits to the Somali Coast increased British interest in Somali affairs.

The Aden Residency had the most direct British contact with Somali coast affairs; and the Political Agent was able to use Indian Navy vessels to establish British influence unobtrusively along the Somali coast while protecting trade, and merchant shipping and harassing the slave trade. It became customary, from the 1841/42 Berbera fair, for an Indian naval vessel

(1) AF 26, FO - Sec. India Board, 7.8.41

(2) AF 66, PA Aden - CG Alexandria, 24.10.47

with Commander Haines' Assistant, Lieutenant C.J. Cruttenden, I.N., to visit that port during the trading season. On occasions, officials from Aden intervened to settle Somali inter-tribal disputes. Such interventions occurred at Berbera in 1842, and again in 1847.

During the 1851/52 fair at Berbera, Captain Haines intervened, unofficially, to prevent the local Dankali, Ottoman-controlled, Governor of Zeila, AbuBakr Shermaki, extending his authority to Berbera (1). AbuBakr was a notorious slave trader. Haines had no authority for intervention. But he had two of AbuBakr's armed dhows seized at Berbera by an Indian Navy vessel. Later, the vessels were released; but, by their detention, Haines had damaged Shermaki's prestige and made clear to the Somalis that AbuBakr did not have British support. The latter never gained control of Berbera.

Haines' successor, Brigadier W. Coghlan, was opposed to any foreign occupation of the Somali coast, and particularly of its main anchorage, Berbera (2); but

(1) AF 102, PA - SGB, 24.12.51. AF 108, PA - SGB, 11.4.52

(2) AF 147, Res - SGB, 8.11.55

Coghlan recognised that the Government of India could not accept any commitment to defend the Habr Awal tribe, the owners of Berbera. Coghlan feared that a foreign occupation would benefit the slave-trade, by giving foreign flag-cover; that it would divert local trade away from Aden; and that it would create other 'troublesome entanglements'. He wanted to include recognition of their independence in the Habr Awal treaty of 1856 (1), as a deterrent to any '... unscrupulous state ... bent upon aggrandizing itself at the expense of a rude people ...' (2). But the Bombay Government wished to avoid any commitment to the Somalis, and a recognition of Habr Awal independence could have been misunderstood as a guarantee of independence which the Government of India was not committed to preserving (3), so the reference was deleted (1). But it was still possible for the Indian Government to challenge any foreign occupation of Berbera (3).

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(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' LXXXVI

(2) p.6.9 n.1

(3) AF 175, SGB - Res, 10.6.56

Aden and the Egyptians on the Somali Coast 1866-1884

In 1866, Major W. Merewether protested against the Ottoman-appointed Governor of Zeila taxing Somali boats, sailing from other ports than Zeila to Aden (1).

Merewether wanted the Porte warned that Britain rejected the Ottoman claim to the whole Dankali and Somali coast. The Foreign Office considered such a protest unnecessary, but the British Ambassador did ask that the Porte should '... give ... such directions to its Authorities [on the African Coast] as will secure Native Boats trading between the African Coast and Aden from further molestation ...'(2).

In 1867, the Aden Residency first reported visits by an Egyptian warship to the Somali coast (3). The vessel visited Rohaita and Berbera. The Egyptian commander, Jaffer Pasha, attempted to induce the coastal populations to recognise Egyptian suzerainty, but his attempts were believed to be unsuccessful. The prospect

(1) FO 78 3186, Merewether's Memo of February, 1866

(2) FO 78 3186, Lord Lyons - Aali Pasha, 25.8.66, copied to FO

(3) AIA 456, Off^e Res - SGB, 24.8.67

of an Egyptian presence in the Gulf of Aden represented a challenge to the local British hegemony and disturbed General E.L. Russell, Aden's new Resident (1). Russell had commanded the British base for the Abyssinian campaign at Zoula in 1868. He had unsuccessfully recommended a British occupation of the fine natural harbour of Assab. Russell realised that the opening of the Suez Canal and the new strategic and commercial value that that would give to the Red Sea made a foreign occupation of Assab likely.(1). The Abyssinian campaign had shown that well-equipped troops could eliminate local opposition. The Foreign Department hoped that, if Britain retired from the area, other Powers would take no new initiatives and competition would be avoided (2).

In 1869, the Bombay Government recognised the need for a more active British presence on the Somali coast, but official opinion was divided over the choice of a British Consular Agent. Colonel Merewether, then Chief Commissioner in Sind, favoured the appointment of a

(1) AIA 489, Res - SGB, 11.11.68

(2) AIA 644, G of I of 5.2.69 - SGB quoted in Hunter's
Summary of 17.12.74

European (1). The Government of Bombay supported Merewether's preference (2), whereas General Russell preferred a native Agent (3). Russell argued that a native Agent would be in less danger than a European. C.U. Aitchison, as officiating Secretary to the Foreign Department, saw no need for early action and postponed a decision for another year (4). Probably the Foreign Department was too ill-informed and too little-interested to decide on a new policy. It is also possible that Aitchison believed that British naval pressure could be used later against the Egyptians to obtain any concessions that might be desirable (5). The usual problem of cost was also a factor; the appointment of the Swiss, Munzinger, was possibly not made because there was no post on the Aden establishment for an extra Assistant to

- (1) FO 78 3186, Merewether's Memo of June 1869, prepared for SGB
- (2) FO 78 3186, SGB - Sec. For. Dept., 29.7.69
- (3) FO 78 3186, Res, 16.12.69 - SGB, giving his views at For. Dept.'s request
- (4) FO 78 3186, Off^g. Sec. For. Dept. - SGB, 22.2.70
- (5) Cf. p.3.30 n.3

to work on the Somali coast. A local non-European Agent would have cost less than a European.

But the Residency remained concerned about existing foreign interest on the Somali coast. French interest at Kar~~am~~ and at Ainterad had been reported in April, 1869 (1).

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The Bombay Government shared Russell's view that an Egyptian occupation of Berbera would be undesirable(2). The Egyptian flag was hoisted over the Berbera 'fort' in April, 1870, although no Egyptian troops landed from the modern Egyptian warship, 'Khartoum', which was anchored in the harbour (3). Russell first sent a Somali interpreter on the Residency staff to Berbera, aboard the Indian Government steamer at Aden, to try to influence his compatriots against the Egyptians. Then Russell

(1) AAR 1869/70

(2) AIA 489 G.B^o Resolution of 4.2.70 and Res letter of 24.12.69 - SGB

(3) AIA Aden Secret^{file} 1870, Report of Commander HMS 'Teazer' - Res, 4.4.70

persuaded Commander Bloomfield, R.N., of H.M.S. 'Teazer' to visit Berbera, in the hope that the presence of a British warship would deter the Somalis and make them '... consider before they sell their country to the Turks ...' (1). Russell wrote to Muhammad Jamali Pasha, aboard the 'Khartoum', explaining that Somali meat supplies for, and Somali trade with, Aden were important British interests (2). Russell asked the Pasha not to '... take any action at Berbera and Bulhar until an understanding is arrived at between the ~~the~~ Government of the Sultan and the British ...' (3). The Pasha denied that he had any authority to acquire or to purchase Berbera; but the Egyptian Government claimed by June that Egypt represented Ottoman authority on the Somali coast (3). Commander Bloomfield had reported in April that the Somalis '... looked upon the Sultan of Turkey as the head of their religion and not the Viceroy of Egypt ...' (4).

(1) PRO Admlty 127/11, Russell (No No.) - Cmdr. Bloomfield, 28.3.70, copied to Commodore i/c, E. Indies Station

(2) FO 78 3186 f 102, Res - Muhammad Pasha, 19.4.70

(3) FO 78 3186, CG Cairo - FO (No 60) of 3.6.70 with

French copies of Anglo-Egyptian exchanges of correspondence

(4) p.6.11 n.3

The Indian Government decided that the Egyptian claim was the concern of the Government in London. The Resident was forbidden to correspond further with Egyptian or Ottoman officials about Berbera and Bulhar, until H.M.G.'s views were known (1). The new Resident (2) however tried, ineffectually, to strengthen Somali unity and to arrange a settlement of local, tribal, differences at Berbera through a Somali employee of the Residency (3). In London, Lord Granville at the Foreign Office required '... some distinct evidence to show that H.M.s Gov^t are entitled to protest, as suggested by Sir E. Russell, against the Viceroy [of Egypt] taking Berbera ... and for [Britain] insisting on the independence of the tribes ...' (4). The India Office could not provide the proof that Granville required. There was none.

Interest in the Somali coast '... was allowed to

- (1) AIA Aden Secret file for 1870, For. Dept. G of I
No 941 P of 8.6.70. AIA 560. The ban was reviewed
by For. Dept. G of I's letter - SGB of 1.3.71
- (2) Major Gen. C.W. Tremenheere arrived on 17.12.70
- (3) AIA 560, Res 3.37 - SGB, 7.1.71 and 2.2.71
- (4) FO 78/3186, FO draft - IO of 8.8.70

drop ...', outside Aden (1). There, shipping casualties forced the Resident's attention to the Somali coast. Following the killing of a shipwrecked British sailor, the Mijjertain coast was blockaded in 1871 (2). Argyll, as Secretary of State, approved '... the utmost exertion to secure ...' those guilty (3). But the Government of Bombay and the Foreign Department were opposed to any new, and direct, intervention on land. Approval was refused for the despatch of a British political officer to the Mijjertain coast during the blockade, because the Somalis retired inland when threatened from the sea. The Bombay Government feared involvements ashore, beyond reach of naval support, if a political officer was appointed.

The Egyptians claimed that Munzinger Pasha's appointment as Governor of Massawa covered not only territory as far south as Edd, but extended beyond, so that he '... exercise[d] general supervision over ...

- (1) FO 78 3187, Comment in Hertslett's FO Memo of 20.10.73 on Egyptian claims to the Somali coast.
- (2) AAR 1870/71
- (3) L/P & S/6/284, S of S - G of I, No 42 of 23.3.71

the Somali country ...' (1). But the Aden Residency still had to take action to rescue survivors, and to arrange the salvage of cargoes, of steamers wrecked on the treacherous and, to Europeans, unfamiliar waters around Cape Guardafui, during 1872-1874 (2). Meantime, the Egyptians continued to strengthen their connections with Berbera. Egyptian naval vessels left the area during the summer monsoon but returned every autumn. By November, 1873, the Egyptian occupation of Berbera was a 'fait accompli'.

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The India Office's successful pressure on the Foreign Office against the Ottomans in the southern Yemen encouraged renewed pressure by Argyll and the India Office for an Egyptian withdrawal from the Somali coast (3). Sir Bartle Frere complained in 1873 that an Egyptian presence on the Somali coast would assist the

(1) AIA 560, Aden News No 13 of 15.9.71

(2) AARs 1872/73 (no paras) and para 97, 1873/74

(3) FO 78 3187, IO note - FO, quoting Argyll, 14.1.74

slave trade (1). But Argyll could not convince Gladstone and Granville that an Egyptian presence was contrary to British interests at Aden; and Granville retained strong doubts about the validity of Indian claims at Berbera (2). In the realistic Foreign Office view, Aden's interest in supplies from Berbera and Bulhar could be preserved by agreements with Egypt to preserve the trade between those anchorages and Aden. The India Office argument was weak, because it rested upon the exaggerated danger of a foreign power being able '... to stop the export ... of the meat, upon which our possession of Aden almost entirely depends ...' (3). In reality, Aden's security depended upon British naval control of the Gulf of Aden, where necessary, and not on the Somali meat rations of a garrison of about 1500 men.

Granville's customary reluctance to commit himself to a definite policy showed; he procrastinated. In his view '... no action is at present called for and [the

(1) AM, Frere - Argyll, Oct 1873

(2) FO 78 3187, Granville's comments on FO Memo of 19.1.74 on IO note of 14.1.74

(3) FO 78 3186, Memo of 29.1.74

matter] had better be left alone ...' (1). With the Liberal Government nearing the end of its period in office, the moment was inopportune for a change in policy; and developments on the Somali coast never became matters of party controversy. The change in Government in February, 1874, led to no change in policy at the India Office, or in the Foreign Office. Lord Salisbury supported the Government of India's views on the Yemen and on Somali affairs as staunchly as the Duke of Argyll had done; and Lord Derby remained as critical of those views as Lord Granville had been. It is probably that the permanent officials influenced their political masters on these issues (2).

Frere was conspicuous because he was converted from opposition to, to support for, Egyptian rule on the Somali Coast (3). He had had the advantage of visiting Aden in 1873 and in talking to officials with

- (1) FO 78 3187, Note by Granville on Minute by Lord Tenterden of 21.1.74
- (2) e.g. FO 78 3187, Lord Tenterden's ~~very~~ comprehensive Memo of 31.1.74 on the background, as known to the FO, of British relations with the Somalis
- (3) FO 78 3187, Undated Memo by Frere passed by IO - FO on 7.8.74

some experience of the Somali Coast. Possibly, Frere's views changed because he learnt that the slave trade was prohibited in Egypt and that the Khedive was prepared to forbid the export of slaves from Egyptian territory (1). Also, the new Egyptian Governor of Massawa, the Swiss, Munzinger Pasha, took vigorous action against slaving dhows (2). Frere's realistic re-appraisal was provoked by reading a Memorandum by Sir William Merewether, arguing for an Egyptian expulsion on the grounds of expediency, not on any legal grounds (3).

Frere recognised that circumstances had changed and that there had to be a new policy, because the Suez Canal had turned the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden from a backwater into a major international trade route. Foreign intervention was inevitable; but, if the new Power was the Ottomans or the Egyptians, local British military security need not suffer (4). British influence

(1) FO 78 3187 f 21, Hertslett's FO Memo of 20.10.73
quoting CG, Alexandria

(2) AIA 658, Aden News No 10 of 6-12.3.74

(3) FO 78 3187, Merewether's Memo of 13.7.74 passed
by IO - FO, 7.8.74

(4) Cf. with Frere's opposition in 1873 in the Yemen, 3.64
n.3.

in the area rested largely upon the prestige of the Resident with the coastal Somali tribes, not upon legal Agreements with the tribes. So long as Britain's standing locally remained higher than that of any other Power, British influence would not be reduced by an Egyptian presence at Berbera; and provided that suitable commercial agreements secured Aden's Somali supplies, an Egyptian occupation might even increase trade by increasing security.

Frere knew that the Aden authorities now recognised that Aden's trade with shipping in transit through the Canal was potentially more important than trade with the Somali Coast. Previously, Aden authorities had been concerned about losing African trade to foreign competitors. In Frere's opinion, Aden's best assets were 'its excellent geographical position' and its fine port. Frere correctly believed that the slave trade in Abyssinia was '... an immense stimulus to intertribal warfare, [tending to keep] the country depopulated, barbarous and unsafe ...' (1). In Frere's view, if Egypt followed a '... policy of real

(1) AIA 644, 3rd head, Frere's Memo undated, 1874, on African coast treaties

true trade ... and above all ... discourage [d] slavers ... we might welcome ...' the Egyptians on the Somali Coast. The only sufferers might be Indian traders who would face new competition.

The nomadic Somali coastal tribes lived along a major sea route once the Suez Canal was opened, but their tribal leaders had slight authority, except amongst the Mijjertaini tribe.(1). Some authority had to supervise contact between the Somalis and European shipping, to protect wrecks and stranded sea-farers and to arrange rescue and salvage operations. But the Somali coast was not highly productive and it had a small population. India could not pay the price of administering that coast; and, although Aden was now recognised to be an Imperial base and not an Indian outpost (2), the Government of India did not want the British Government to take over financial responsibility for, and political control of, Aden (3).

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(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.158

(2) LI, S of S - Viceroy, No 227 of 7.8.74

(3) MP,Minto: 827 p.37, For. Dept. Summary 1899-1905.

Reference to Indian Govt's objections in 1890.

Egyptian and British claims in Somaliland

The Egyptians wanted to have their claim to all the African coast along the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden including the British-claimed Moussa and Eibat islands, recognised by Britain (1). Without such recognition, the French were unlikely to give up Obokh, purchased in 1862. The Egyptians were concerned about French arms exports into Abyssinia so long as Obokh was outside Egyptian control. Both the British Consul General at Alexandria and the Ambassador at Constantinople suggested that the British-claimed islands '... might be given up to the Viceroy [of Egypt] without inconvenience ...' (2). Lord Northbrook disagreed. Salisbury supported the Viceroy in deprecating the cession of the islands and also considered an Egyptian occupation of Berbera and Bulhar undesirable (3).

By November, 1874, a naval report confirmed the 'de

(1) p.6.4 n.3 and 4

(2) FO 78 3187, Sir Henry Elliot - FO, No 484 of 3.11.73

(3) L/P & S/3/104, Vol 97, Comments of IO - FO on G of I
Despatch No 78 of 1.5.74

facto' Egyptian occupation of Berbera (1). The Consul General at Alexandria continued to press for British recognition of the Egyptian occupation, subject to adequate safeguards for Aden's free trade (2). In December, Lord Tenterden minuted to Lord Derby ;

'... The India Office have allowed this question to drift on, by their impractical position on it, until the Egyptians are firmly established ...' (3). But, by then, the Government of India had accepted the need for an amicable settlement which would preserve British

'... commercial and other advantages at Berbera and elsewhere ...' (4). That more realistic Indian attitude possibly reflected Northbrook's later, personal, view that Britain had the best position in the Gulf of Aden, at Aden, and therefore had no cause for jealousy of other Powers' interest in the area (5). But the private

(1) FO 78 3168, Report by Cmdr. A. Brooke, R.N.

H.M.S. Vulture, 20.11.74

(2) FO 78 3168, CG Alexandria - FO, 15.9.74

(3) FO 78 3168, Minute Tenterden - Derby, 29.12.74

(4) LI, G of I, 9.10.74 - S of S

(5) p. 6.42 n.1

correspondence of Argyll and of Northbrook show no expressed personal interest in Somali Coast affairs by either man, in contrast to their strongly-expressed objections to an Ottoman presence in southern Yemen.

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The Residency and Egyptian control of Berbera

The Egyptian occupation of Berbera was initially welcomed by the local Ayal Yunis section of the Habr Awal, who thought that they would benefit from the newcomers. Redhwan Bey, the first Egyptian Governor, closed the rival anchorage of Bulhar, belonging to the Ayal Yunis' rivals, the Ayal Ahmad section of the Habr Awal. Redhwan hoped to make Egyptian control easier by concentrating trade at Berbera. But inter-tribal feuds made it impossible to direct all Bulhar's trade to Berbera. Exports of ghee and livestock from the Somali Coast to Aden declined during the 1874-75 trading season; and General Schneider tried to browbeat Redhwan, in direct negotiations, into reopening Bulhar.

Schneider's tactics resembled Northbrook's initiative

in 1873, when Northbrook ordered that Schneider should warn Ahmad Mukhtar Pasha that the latter's actions in the Yemen were unfriendly to the British (1). The dispute was placed on a personal level. Schneider sent Captain F.M. Hunter with a mild official letter of protest, asking that Redhwan '... at once remove the restrictions ... imposed on [exports] ... from Bulhar ...' (2). The Arabic translation of Schneider's English draft was less preremptory, it 'begged of' Redhwan the raising of Bulhar's blockade (3). But Hunter's instructions required him to use much stiffer language to Redhwan; '... Observe to the Pasha that the Resident is of opinion that the British Government will not tolerate the closing of any ports on the Somali Coast ...' (4). In issuing this order Schneider was acting without the authority of the Foreign Department.

Schneider was probably influenced by his recent

(1) p.3.27 n.3

(2) AIA 644, Res - Redhwan Bey, Nov 1874, f 32 English,
f 29 Arabic

(3) طَلَب = request, كَلَب مِن = beg of,
'Wehr's Dictionary', p.563

(4) AIA 644, Res instructions - Hunter, 13.11.74

success in securing an Ottoman withdrawal in the Yemen; his stock with his superiors, and his local prestige, was high. Schneider moreover wrongly believed that the Ottoman officers in the Yemen acted against their official instructions (1). He possibly believed that Redhwan's action was also unauthorised. But Hunter was a moderate, tactful man. When Redhwan explained that he was simply carrying out orders, Hunter only protested that the closing of Bulhar, despite the Resident's remonstrances, was unfriendly (2). Bulhar remained closed until after the 1875/76 season (3). By Article II of the Alexandria agreement, recognising Egyptian sovereignty, Bulhar was to be, like Berbera, a free port. But neither Bulhar nor Berbera remained free ports: the Egyptians had promised to give away more than they could afford by their agreement of 1877. In 1881, the Resident even agreed to

(1) p.3.66 n.4

(2) AIA 644, Hunter's Report - Res of 21.11.74

(3) LA, Res 18.373 of 16.3.76 - SGB, copied to S of S

the closure of Bulhar without complaints by the Aden merchants (1).

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The minor rôle of Berbera in Egyptian colonial plans

By 1875, the Khedive was not interested in Berbera and the Somali Coast for its relatively meagre commercial possibilities. He wanted an East African outlet (2) at Brava or Kismayu, as a terminus for the produce of the Central African Lakes District (3). Baker and Gordon had been appointed to expand Egyptian control in Equatoria from 1869 to 1877. But the Nile passage proved too difficult and dangerous a route for Equatorial exports to Egypt. Unfortunately for the Khedive, the ports he wanted were northern possessions of the Sultan of

- (1) BSC 81/84, Res - CG Alexandria, 5.9.81
- (2) FO 78 3189, Memo by CG Vivian, on leave in England, dated 24.8.76 and Memo of 19.8.76 by Mr Wylde to Lord Derby
- (3) Suggested by Gordon. Lord Elton 'General Gordon', London, 1954, p.194-195. (Hereafter Elton 'Gordon').

Zanzibar. However, McKillop Pasha occupied both ports in 1875 (1). By that time the Khedive's forces could control, or threaten, all the Dankali and Somali coasts, except for French-claimed Obokh, thereby controlling almost all access to Abyssinia and being able to restrict arms supplies to the interior. That made the possibility of Egyptian domination over the Emperor John of Abyssinia, over Menelik of Shoa, and over the Galla and Somali tribes seem more likely.

However, in November 1875, the Emperor John decisively defeated some 4000 Egyptian troops at Gundet in Eritrea (2). A second Egyptian force, instead of avenging the defeat, was beaten in March, 1876. While the Danakil overran another small Egyptian force in November, 1875. Munzinger Pasha and 310 soldiers were killed (3). These military misfortunes led the Resident at Aden to moralise that naval power could control any portion of the African Coast, but that the difficulties

(1) AAR 1875/76

(2) AAR 1875/76, para 16

(3) AAR 1875/76, para 15

began in the interior, beyond naval support (1). Unfortunately for the Khedive, British naval power far exceeded his own; and the Egyptian forces were obliged to evacuate Brava and Kisimayu, after British remonstrances in support of the Sultan of Zanzibar, early in 1876. The Sultan of Zanzibar had ensured British support by abolishing slavery in his Egyptian-occupied northern territories (2). General Gordon blamed Nubar Pasha for British opposition; Gordon said that he had warned Nubar in 1875 that the latter should secure British agreement before despatching an Egyptian expedition to the East African Coast (3). Nubar believed that he had already secured British approval through Sir Bartle Frere.

The Resident believed that the Khedive had occupied Zeila and Berbera as a springboard for the occupation of Harrar (4). Egyptian officers had visited Harrar and

(1) AAR 1875/76, para 17

(2) LA Aden News, Report No 51 of 23-29.12.75

(3) Lord Elton 'General Gordon' p.195, London, 1954

(4) AAR 1875/76, para 12

proceeded beyond into Galla territory on reconnaissance in 1874 (1). Harrar was occupied in 1875. The Harraris welcomed the Egyptians, at first, as fellow-Muslims who would help them against their pagan Galla neighbours (2). A small Egyptian force of 500 men, from Zeila, was therefore adequate for the initial occupation (3). It is possible that the Egyptians were considering an alliance with Menelik of Shoa against the Emperor John. The Egyptians in Harrar established communications with Menelik in 1876 (4); but, by 1878, Egyptian relations with Menelik were bad (5). Egyptian relations with the Harraris and the neighbouring Galla, and Issa Somali, tribes also deteriorated drastically. Major F.M. Hunter ascribed that deterioration, in 1884, to bad Egyptian administration and to blatant extortion (2)

(1) AIA 644, Res - SGB, 20.3.74

(2) FO 78 3725, F.M. Hunter's Report of 7.4.84 - Baring

(3) p.6.28 n. 4

(4) Aden News No 9 of 1876

(5) LI P & S Vol 5 f 887, Menelik's letter of 21.2.78
- Queen Victoria via the Resident at Aden

In August, 1876, the British Consul General at Alexandria, then on home leave, minuted that the Khedive '... w^d not be the least obliged to us for ack^s his sovereignty over a long range of barren and unsettled territory where he w^d neither have the wish nor the power to abolish the slave trade ...' (1). The Khedive still hoped to gain control of Somali territory down to the Juba River (2). Berbera on its own was an expensive Egyptian commitment. In June, 1876, the Acting Resident urged that the Khedive should abandon it as an economy measure (3). At last, in 1877, the British Government gave qualified recognition to the Egyptian occupation of the Somali Coast (4). The slave trade was to be banned; Egypt had to agree not to cede any of the territory to foreign Powers; Berbera and Bulhar were to remain free ports; and British recognition was subject

(1) FO 78 3189, Minute of 24.8.76

(2) FO 78 3189, FO Memo by Mr Wylde of 19.8.76, quoting the Consul General, Alexandria

(3) LI (P & S 76) Ag. Res - S of S, 3.6.76

(4) FO 78 3189 f 282, Memo of May 1877 on draft agreement

to the Sultan's ratification of the Agreement. The penultimate condition was unrealistic because Egypt needed the customs revenues to pay for Egyptian administration. The Sultan never ratified the Agreement.

British recognition of Egyptian claims on the Somali Coast did not make Egyptian influence any more effective there. The most dangerous coastal stretch around Cape Guardafui belonged to the Mijjertain tribe; and they had no agreements with the Egyptians (1). Ships continued to be wrecked there. Early in 1879, the new 2800 ton iron steamer, S.S. 'Vortigern', was stranded, carrying a politically sensitive cargo of American rifles, gunpowder and other cargo, near Ras Hafun (2). The Somalis treated the British sailors well; and the Resident's First Assistant, Major G.R. Goodfellow, made an agreement with the Mijjertain for the protection of shipping and seafarers despite Egypt's nominal sovereignty.

(1) AIA 575 Pt II. See Report of Mate of I.M.S. Kwangtung, Mr. Elton of 20.7.72 to Res on treacherous conditions around C. Guardafui

(2) P & S Vol 5, Res 8/356 of 28.2.79, copied to S of S

The Resident asked for the agreement to be ratified, and for Egyptian consent to be obtained (1). As the Resident pointed out, the Mijjertain Somalis denied 'Egyptian suzerainty; and the Egyptians '... are perfectly ignorant of that portion of the African coast ...' (2). Nor was that a purely Residency bias. The Captain of H.M.S. 'Seagull' commented on '... the [well known] hatred of the Somali tribes for the Egyptians ...; were their [Somalis] power equal to their desires not an Egyptian would be left on the Somali littoral ...' (3).

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- (1) P & S Vol 5, Res - S of S 15/625 of (undated)
April 1879
- (2) Res instructions to Major Goodfellow before the
latter went to R. Hafun, 24.3.79, PS Vol 5 f 803
- (3) P & S Vol 5 f 1465, Report of Capt. Heron of H.M.S.
Seagull of 5.6.80 - Res and to Admlty

Berbera and Urabi Pasha's revolt

Urabi Pasha's nationalist movement was welcomed by the Egyptian troops at Harrar and on the African Coast, although Farhat Bey, in command at Berbera, declared for the Khedive, after a period of fence-sitting(1). The Egyptian troops had grievances: they were isolated, amongst a largely hostile population, and the Berbera troops resented having to do navvying work (2). The Resident at Aden was concerned that support for Urabi might lead to a ban on livestock shipments to Aden, because the British were supporting the Khedive (3). In return, the Egyptian garrison were apprehensive of a British attack on the Somali Coast (4). Egyptian tension relaxed when the Acting Consul, Captain C.W. Sealey, informed the Bey that there was no British intention of

- (1) AIA 891, Res - SGB, 18.7.82. Nadi Pasha at Harrar was related to Urabi and had served in the same Regiment with him
- (2) AIA 891 f 107, Report of Acting British Agent, Berbera, Mohamed Abdar Rahman Hindi
- (3) AIA 891, Res. tel. - SGB, 12.7.82
- (4) AIA 891, Br. Agent Berbera - Br. Consul Somali Coast, 20.7.82

interfering on the Somali Coast (1). General Loch did not, however, trust Farhat Bey's professions of goodwill to the British and the Khedive in October, 1882 (2).

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Hunter's role as the first British Consul to the Somali Coast

Major F.M. Hunter was hastily appointed British Consul to the Somali Coast in March, 1881, so that he could take up his duties before a French or Italian Consul arrived (3). In General ^{F.A.E} ~~G.B.~~ Loch's view, Hunter's seniority over his fellow consuls would help '... to keep up the prestige of Great Britain in these 'waters' and in the Red Sea ...' (4). As Consul, Hunter came

- (1) AIA 891, Br. ^{Agent} ~~Ag.~~ Berbera to Ag. Br. C.S.C., 29.7.82
- (2) AIA 891, Farhat - Res, 26.10.82
- (3) LI, G of I - Res, 25.3.81, Res - G of I, acknowledging receipt of Hunter's Exequatur', 6.4.81. The initiative came from the Indian authorities, but the appointment was ~~by~~ the FO
- (4) LI, Res - SGB, 8.2.81

under the British Consul-General in Egypt, who was under the British Ambassador to the Porte. The Resident at Aden was too senior to hold a Consul's post. Loch's choice of his First Assistant for the Consular post was realistic. Hunter had 10 years experience in Aden and had had frequent contact with Somalis there and in Africa. Hunter had recently been appointed First Assistant to the Resident and could be expected to remain some years at Aden. It was important that continuity in the post should be ensured. The Consul's effectiveness depended largely upon good personal relations with the proud and sensitive Somalis (1). Hunter understood them better than any other European; and the Somalis respected Hunter (2).

Hunter's dual roles, as First Assistant to the Resident and as Consul, gave him unique opportunities for assessing the weakness, and therefore the transitory nature, of the Egyptian position on the Coast; and he

(1) Cf. D. Jardine 'The Mad Mullah of Somaliland', London, 1923, p.28, (hereafter Jardine 'Mullah'), on the qualities required of a British administrator with the Somalis.

(2) Times of India, Obituary of Col. F.M. Hunter, 1898

had opportunities as First Assistant at Aden for making some preparations for preserving British interests after the Egyptians' departure. His preparations included unofficial, but effective, special training in musketry, for forty picked men of Aden's police force (1). Most of these policemen were Somalis; others belonged to various Asian races; but all were recruited in Aden. From Hunter's point of view, as an Indian political, rather than as a military, officer, this detachment had the advantage that it was directly under his command, subject only to the Resident's approval. Military permission was not required to use the detachment, and there was no military supervision over its use once on the Somali Coast.

When a British presence was established on the Somali Coast these police were transferred to the new establishment and formed the trained nucleus around which a local administration was built. As a mainly Somali civilian force they could be used unobtrusively, without arousing local resentment, or attracting the critical attention

(1) L.P. Walsh 'Under the Flag and Somali Coast Stories', London, 1932, hereafter Walsh 'Somali Coast', p.200

of rival European Powers. They did not represent a military occupation, as Indian Army detachments would have done. Their use did not therefore suggest new Indian military commitments in the area. Their pay and conditions of service were deliberately kept the same as in the Aden Police service so that men from the two services were interchangeable at the discretion of the First Assistant Resident (1).

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Sir Evelyn Baring, who had been Lord Northbrook's private secretary when the latter was Viceroy, was appointed British Agent and Consul General in Egypt in September, 1883. Baring wished to reduce Egyptian expenditure; one of his economy measures, made mandatory by the Mahdi's success in the Sudan, was the withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons scattered about the provinces of the Sudan. Garrisons on the Emperor John's border were evacuated through Abyssinia by arrangements made with

(1) BSC 81/84, Off^g Res (Hunter) - S of S, August 1884

the Emperor. Those negotiations were conducted by Rear Admiral Sir William Hewitt, C. in C., E. Indies (1). Another isolated garrison was that of Harrar, over 100 miles inland from Zeila, cut off by hostile Galla and Somali tribes, and unconnected to Abyssinian or Shoan territory.

The Egyptians lacked the troops, or the finances, to prepare a relief expedition; the Harrar garrison's lines of communication were insecure and Baring needed reliable local information before evacuation plans could be made. Issa caravans travelled between Zeila and Harrar. Major F.M. Hunter was a natural intermediary with the Issa, and a source of information and assistance for Baring. At Baring's request he visited Harrar in March; in April, Hunter submitted his report, on the measures required for an evacuation, direct to Baring without sending the Resident at Aden a copy (2). Hunter explained that the views expressed were his own, and that Baring should refer to the Resident, General Blair,

(1) Details in PRO, FO 1.31

(2) FO 78 3725, C.S.C. - Baring, 7.4.84

for the latter's views. Hunter's excuse was that, as Baring required the report urgently, he had no time to obtain Blair's approval; and, as the Consul, Hunter could communicate with Baring without reference to the Resident.

Hunter's proposal, however, involved the temporary British occupation of Zeila and of Berbera, which would require some force from Aden. Hunter possibly knew that General Blair was applying for a short leave of 3 months, when Hunter was likely to be officiating as Resident. Blair was in no position to comment on Hunter's proposals, but he would have been expected to do so if Hunter had copied them to him. Walsh implied that Hunter anticipated British intervention on the Somali Coast in February, 1884 (1); and that Hunter corresponded private^{ly} with Sir James Fergusson, the Governor of Bombay, in May, about Foreign Office proposals for an occupation of Berbera, using police, not troops, from Aden (2).

The India Office knew nothing, officially, about a

(1) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.201

(2) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.98-99. There is no evidence of this elsewhere

possible Egyptian evacuation until early May (1). Lord Kimberley favoured closer treaties with the Somali chiefs, comparable to the Anglo-Mahri agreement for Socotra (2), a temporary British occupation of Berbera to forestall other Powers, and, possibly, British recognition of Ottoman claims to Zeila and Tajoura. The Viceroy proposed new agreements with the Somali tribes; he recognised the importance of Zeila and of Berbera to Aden, but hoped to avoid a military occupation (3). There was no mention of any police action; and no indication that Hunter's long-term preparations were known to the Foreign Department, or to the India Office, or to Baring (4).

Hunter felt that the British Government would not want Berbera and Zeila placed under the control of the Aden authorities (5). He favoured '... occasional visits

(1) FO 78 3725, U/S IO - U/S FO, 8.5.84

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXIII

(3) FO 78 3725, Tel. Viceroy - IO, 10.5.84

(4) p. 6.36n.1

(5) FO 78 3725, Hunter - Baring, 7.4.84

by a political officer and the placing of the whole province [i.e. Harrar and the Somali and Dankali Coasts up to Tajoura] within the political jurisdiction of the Residency ...' to keep British prestige high amongst the Somalis and Galla. Hunter offered his observations to Baring '... with all respect and diffidence ...'. He outlined the British rôle as solely that of 'peacemakers and patrons'. After visiting Harrar he realised that no trace of Egyptian influence could be maintained (1).

British officials were divided about the attitude Britain should adopt towards French claims in the area to some 70 miles of Dankali coast reaching down to near Tajoura. The French pressed their claims forcefully upon the Egyptians (2). Lord Northbrook, at the Admiralty, deplored British 'jealousy' of the French or Italian positions. He had come to oppose the '... traditional policy of trying to prevent the establishment of any other power ...' in the southern Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (3). The British, in his view, should be satisfied

(1) FO 78 3725, Hunter's Memo on Harrar, 5.4.84 - Baring

(2) FO 78 3725, Baring - FO, 3.3.84 and earlier in Oct 83

(3) FO 78 3725, Northbrook - Granville, 12.4.84

with the possession of the best positions in the area. Northbrook was also confident of the Royal Navy's ability to dominate the area in wartime (1). But Aden Residency correspondence in 1883 had emphasized the potential danger of French arms imports into the area (2). Reports from Cairo had mentioned a French proposal for a railway from the Bay of Tajoura to Shoa (3). French commercial interest in the area, and particularly in Harrar, was plain.

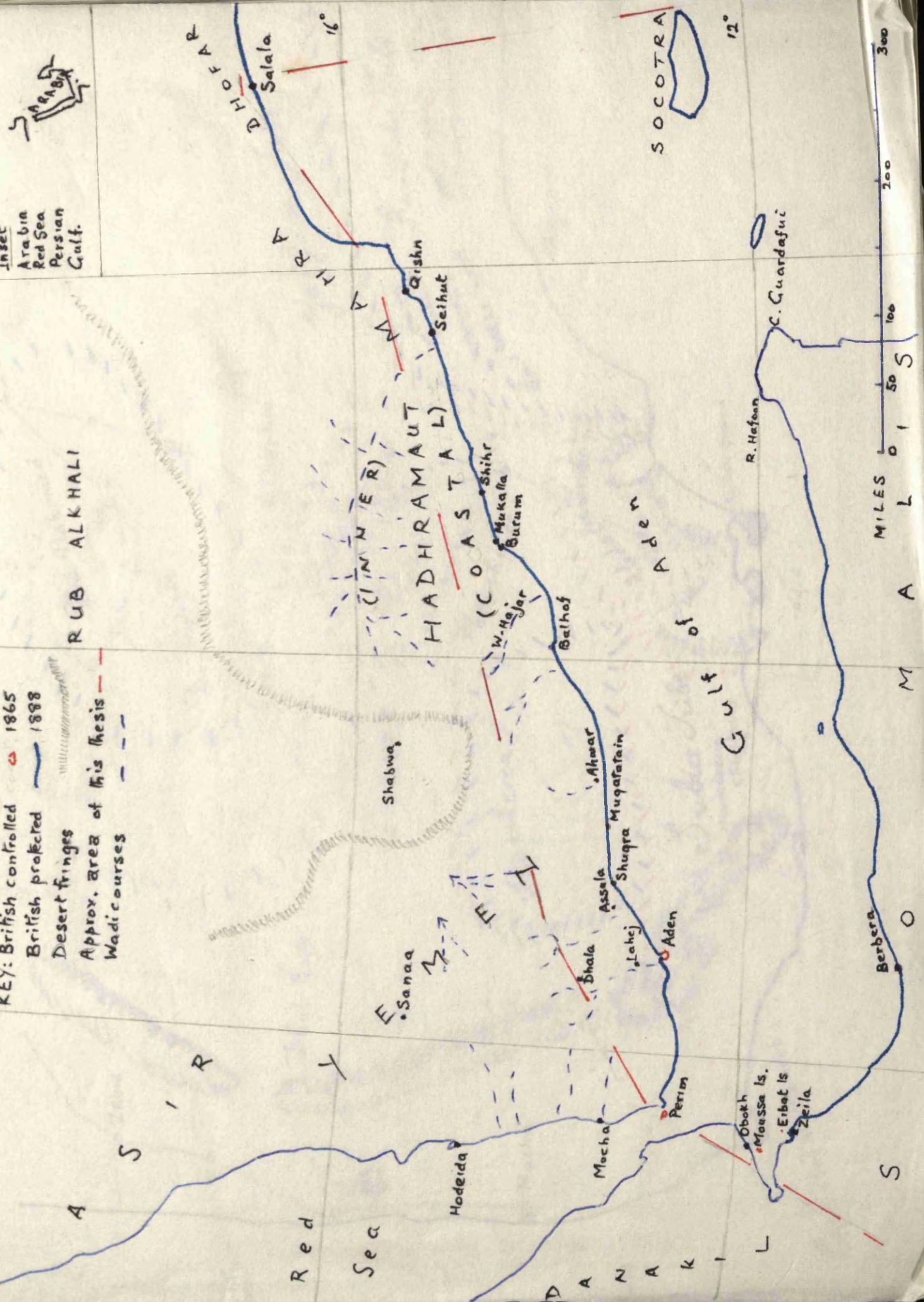
The India Office suggested in March, 1884, that the Egyptians should recognise the existing French settlement; but, unrealistically, it suggested that '... some practical steps should, without delay, be taken ... to anticipate any possible [further] French occupation ...' south-westwards (4). In February, an Admiralty Memorandum had

- (1) Cr.P. Vol 4, Northbrook - Baring, 8.2.84
- (2) FO 78 3725, IO - FO, 4.4.84, forwarding correspondence from Res of March 1883
- (3) FO 78 3725, CG, Cairo - FO, 14.4.83, quoting 'Phare d'Alexandria' of 11.4.83
- (4) FO 78 3725, IO - FO, 5.3.84

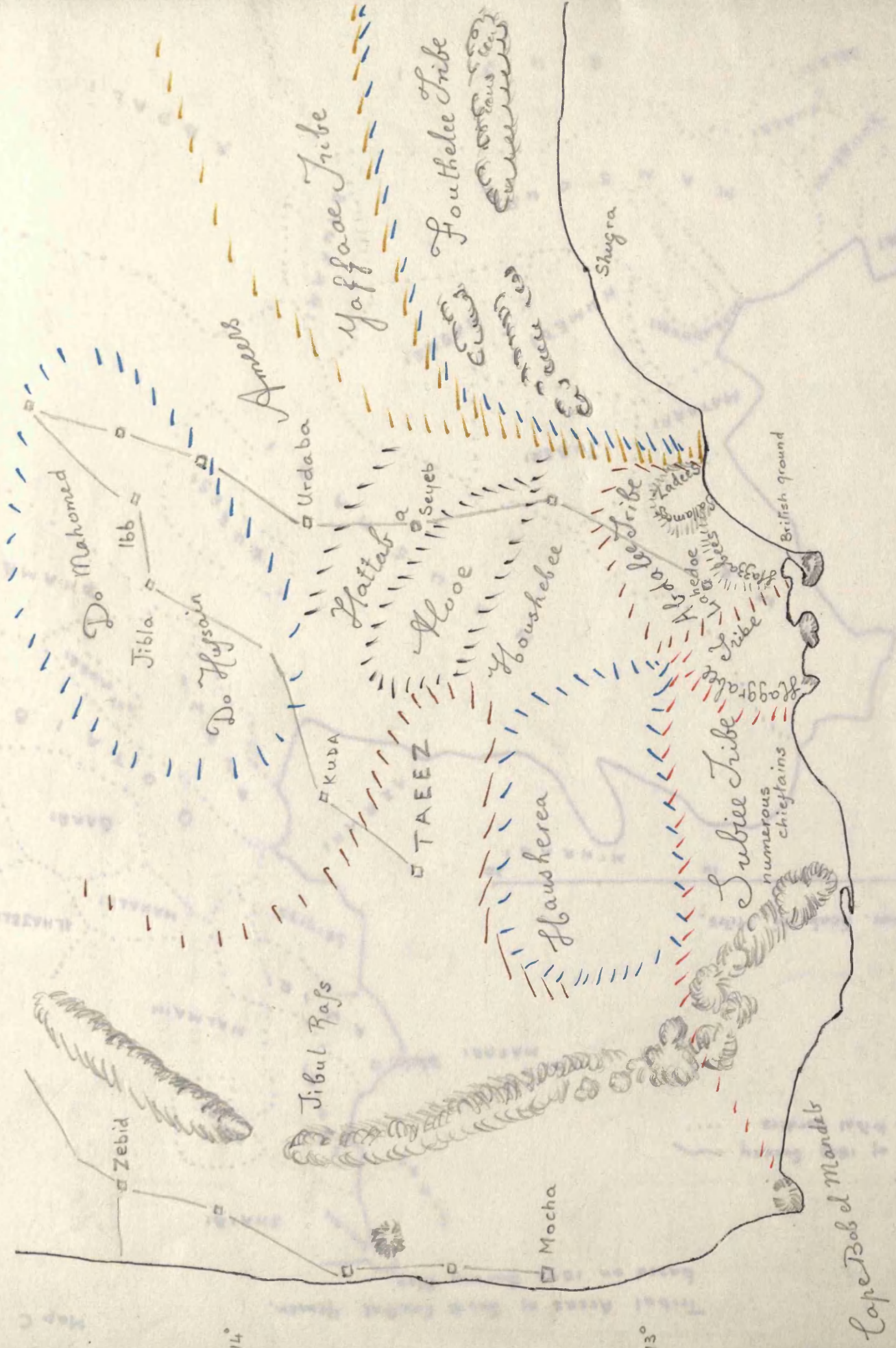
THE EXPANSION OF BRITISH INFLUENCE, 1865-1905.

KEY: British controlled 1865
British protected 1898
Desert fringes
Approx. area of this thesis
Wadicourses

Inset
Arabia
Red Sea
Persian
Gulf.



Tracing from Cmdr. S.B. Haines' Tribal map of 1839 (AFI)



emphasized the value of Somali produce for British forces in the Red Sea (1). Late in June 1884, a Foreign Office minute noted complacently that it was unthinkable that the Egyptians should evacuate any major positions in the Gulf of Aden without giving the British sufficient time to prepare their own arrangements for such places (2). But, no plans had been prepared, except by Hunter. The French had unexpectedly occupied Sagallo on the withdrawal of local Egyptian forces (3). Naval sources reported on 12th May that the French intention was to encircle Tajoura on the landward side and divert its caravan trade to Obokh. Later in May, the British Ambassador in Paris reported rumours of the coming despatch of a French Resident with a military guard to Obokh (4). On 29th May, Lord Dufferin, the British Ambassador at Constantinople, was given private advance warning of the forthcoming

(1) FO 78 3725, Admiralty Memo of 9.2.84 on Egyptian Coast territory south of the Red Sea

(2) FO 78 3726, Minute U/S Pauncefoot - Granville, 28.6.84

(3) FO 78 3725, Egerton, Ag.C.G., Cairo - FO, 18.5.84

(4) FO 78 3725, HM Amb Paris - FO, 24.5.84

Tribal Areas of South Central Yemen,
based on 1892 Survey Map.

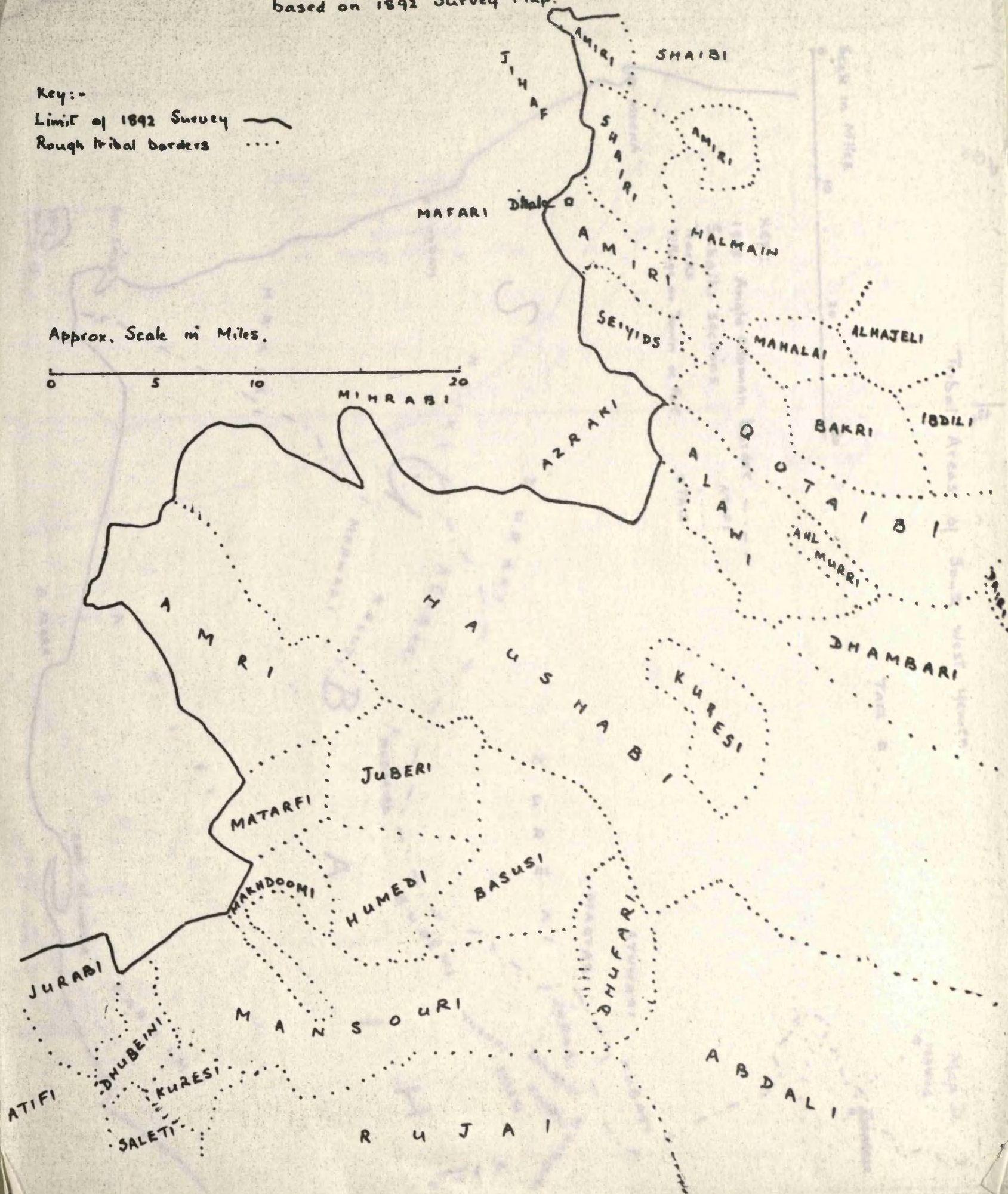
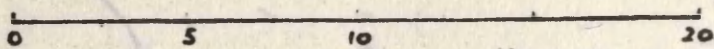
Map C

Key:-

Limit of 1892 Survey ———

Rough tribal borders

Approx. Scale in Miles.



Tribal Areas of South West Yemen

Map D

Scale in Miles



KEY:

- 1905 Anglo Ottoman border - - -
- Subaihi sections ATIFI
- Tracks
- Village or Town or Fort. O TAIZ

TAIZ

MAWIA

ADAREJA

MOCHA

KUDDAM

SH. SAID

PERIM IS.

R. ALARA

KHOR ALUMEIRA

ATHWARI

MAQTARI

ZURAKI

DURAFI

HAIKI

KUDDAM

ACHBARI

KALUT

MANWALI

MUDARIBA

FERMI

JURABI

KURABI

SALEH

MANSOORI

R. UJ

H

I

A

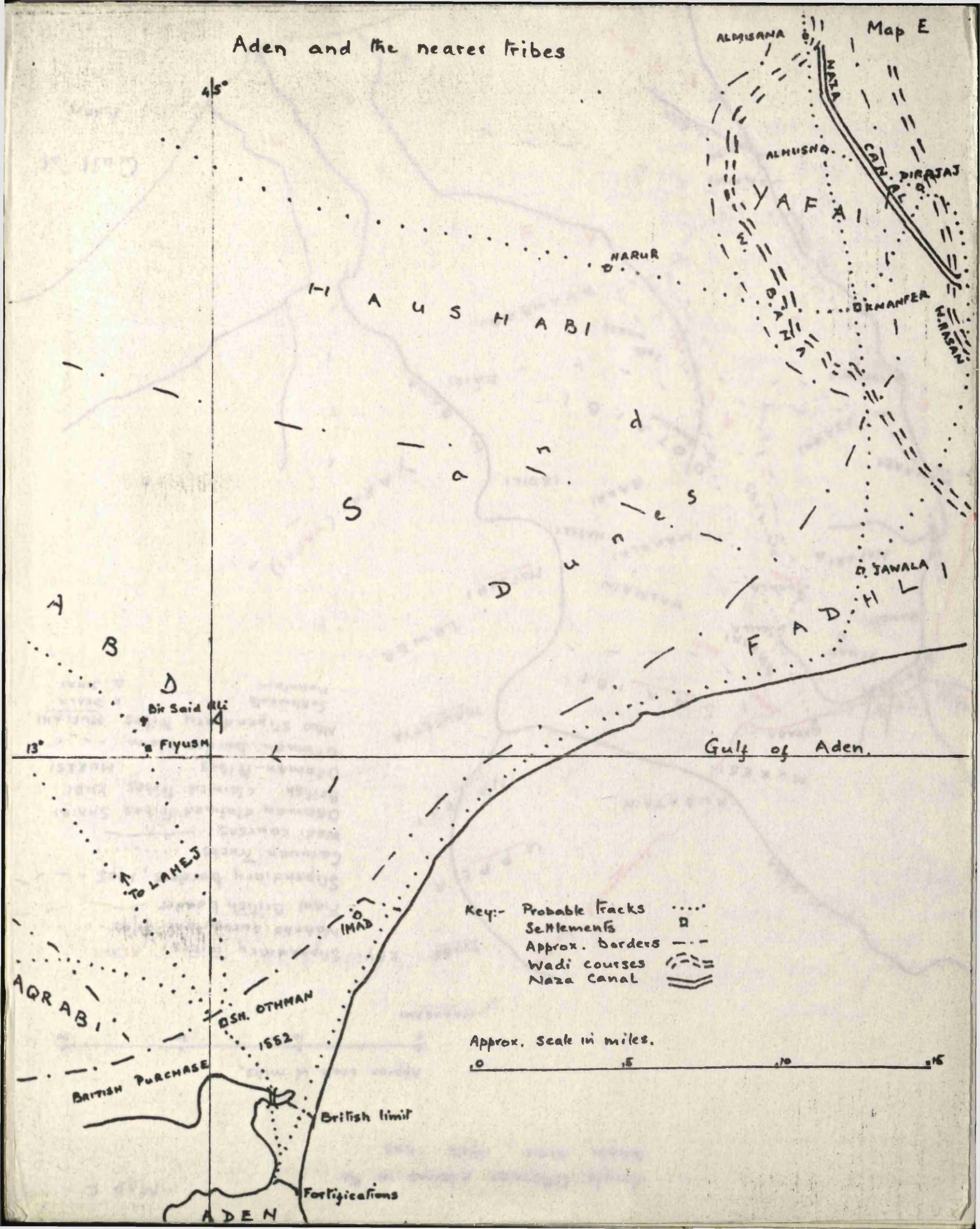
B

F

A

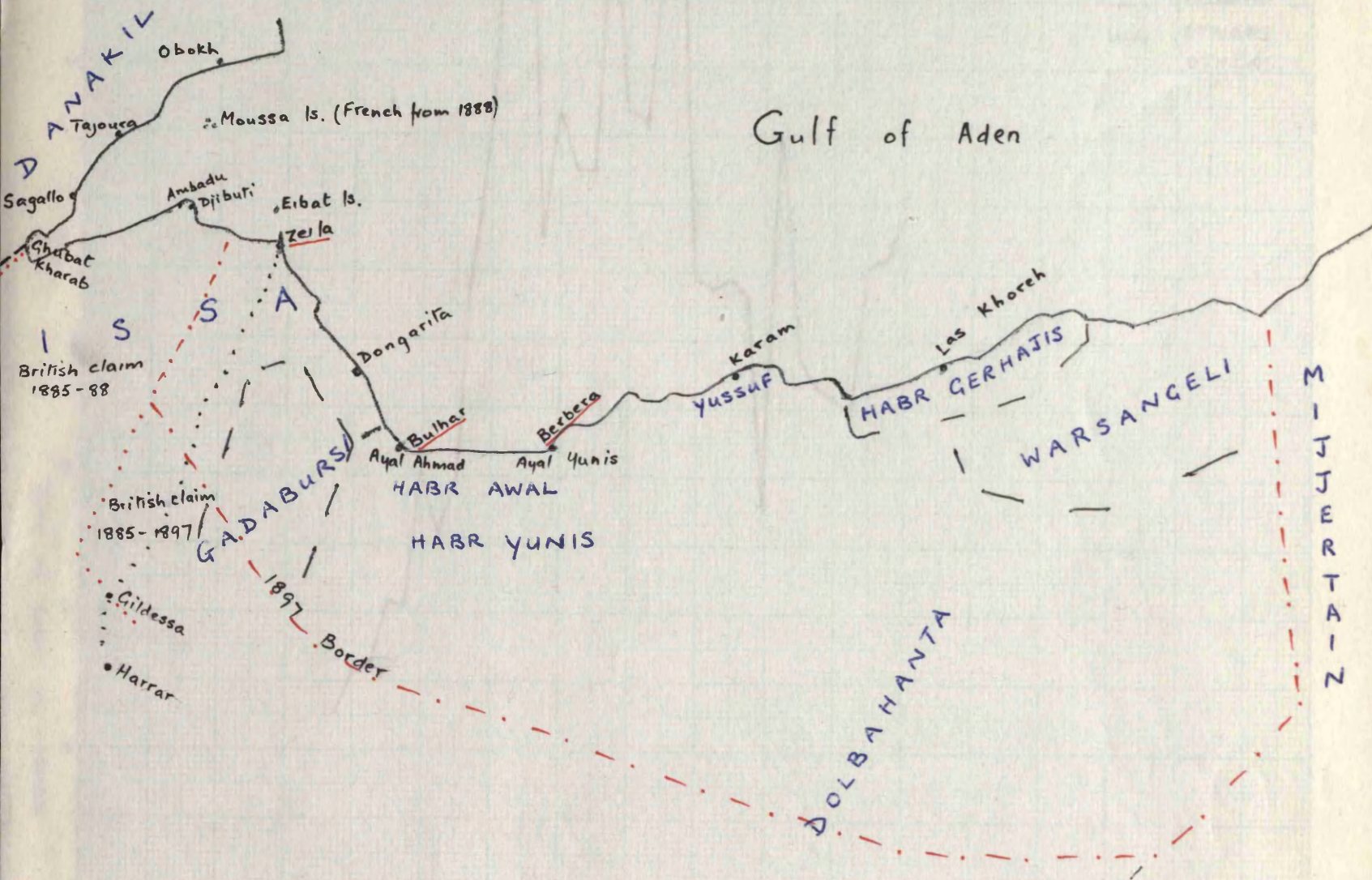
Aden and the nearer tribes

Map E



The Somali Coast of the Gulf of Aden

Map G



Approx. Scale in miles.

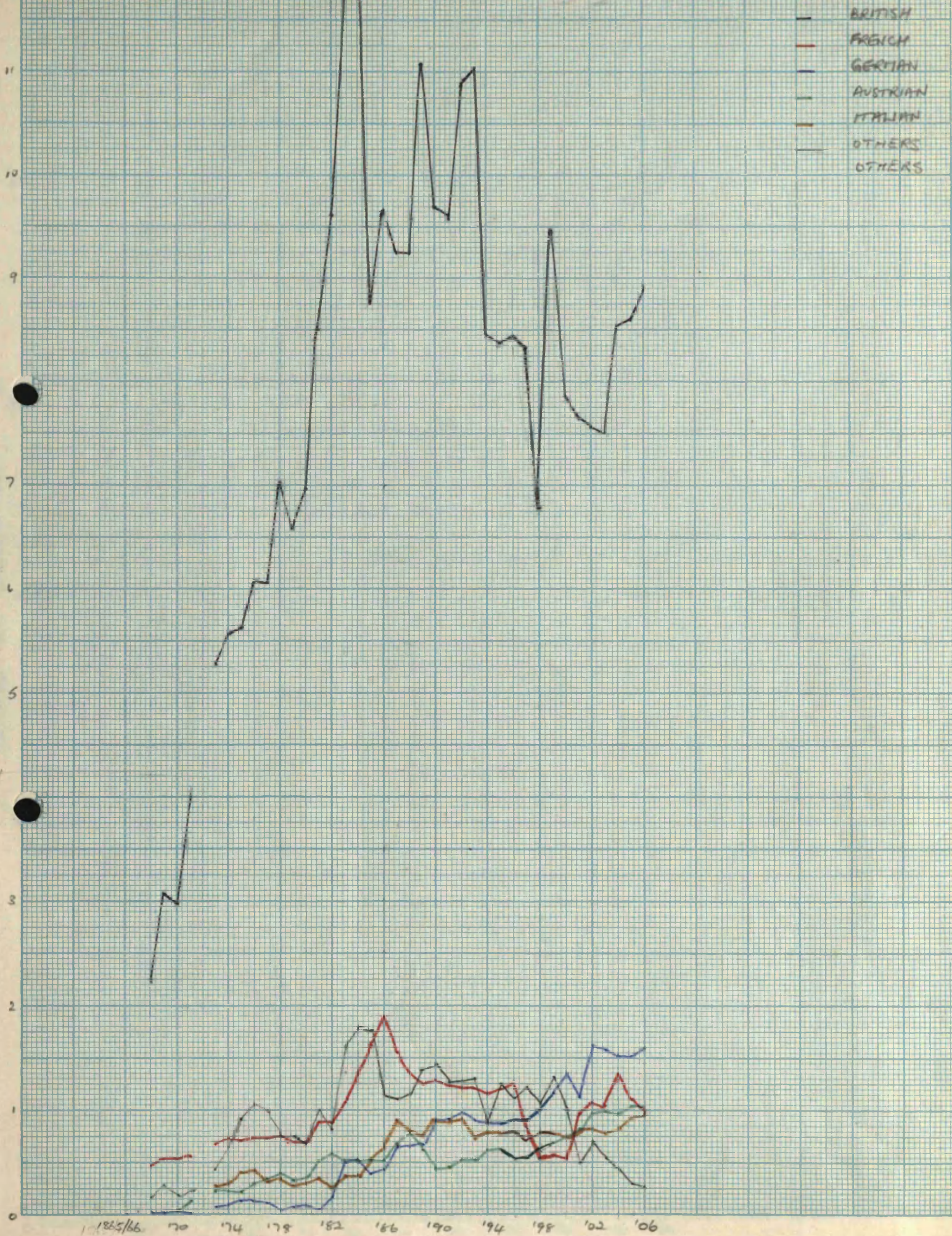


- Approx. Tribal borders in 1886 — /
- Caravan route
- British administered settlements from 1884/85 Berbera
- Somali Tribes HABR AWAL
- Extreme limits of British claims
- British limits 1897 - - - -

Nationality of Shipping visiting Aden, 1868/71 and 1873-1906

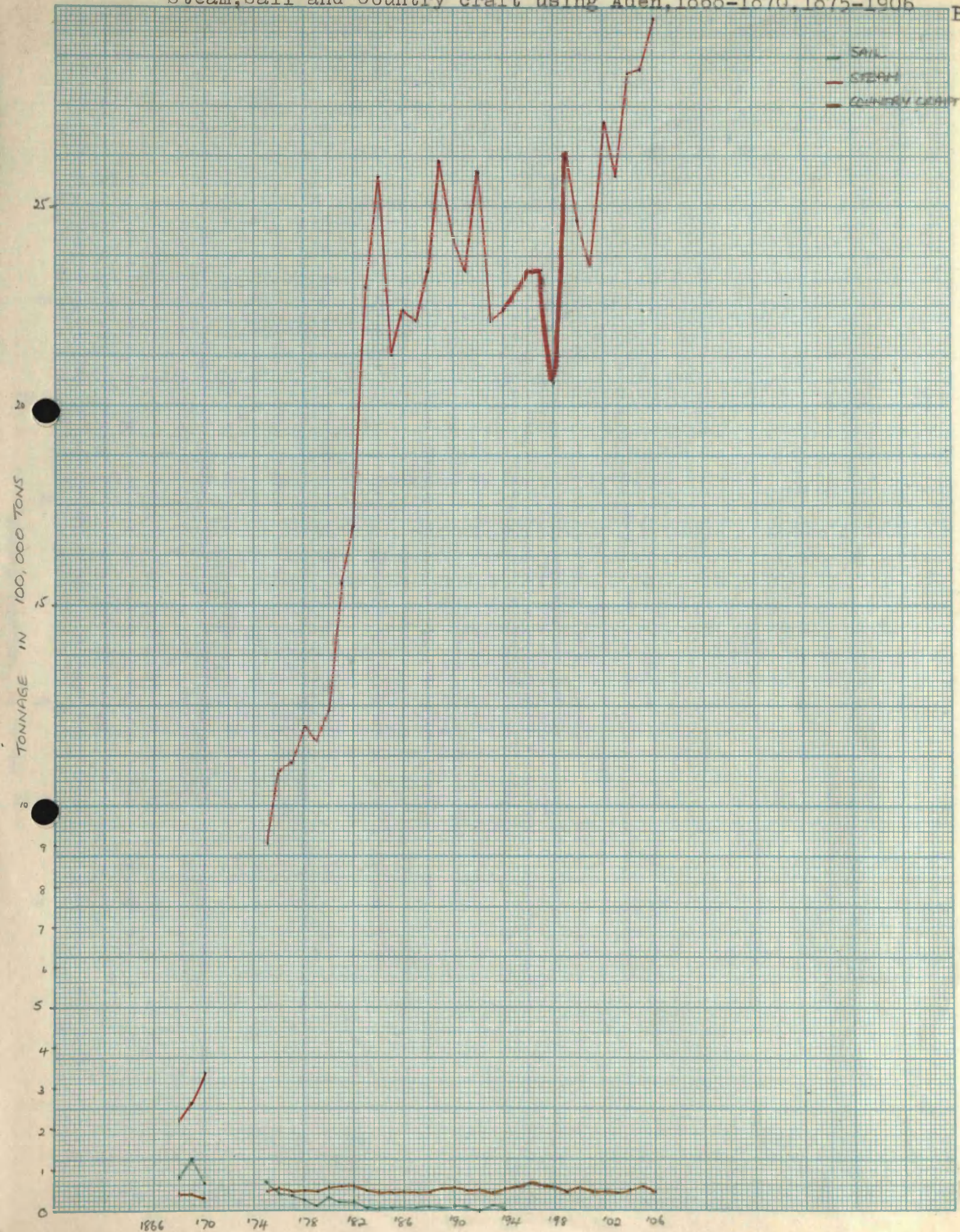
A

NUMBER OF SHIPS IN 100'S



Steam, Sail and Country craft using Aden, 1868-1870, 1875-1906

B



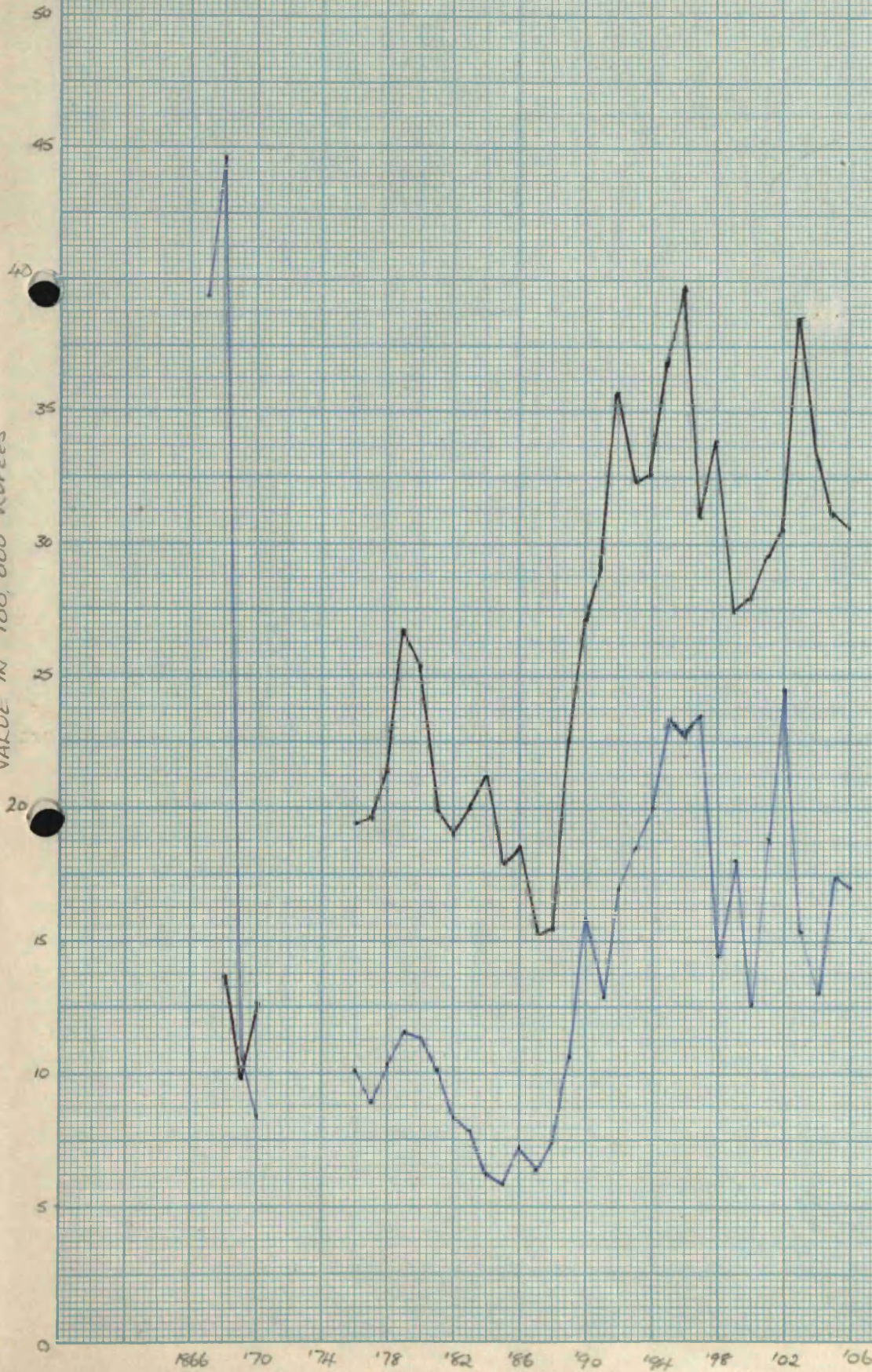
Aden's Trade by Land

C

VALUE IN 100,000 RUPEES

— LAND IMPORTS
— LAND EXPORTS

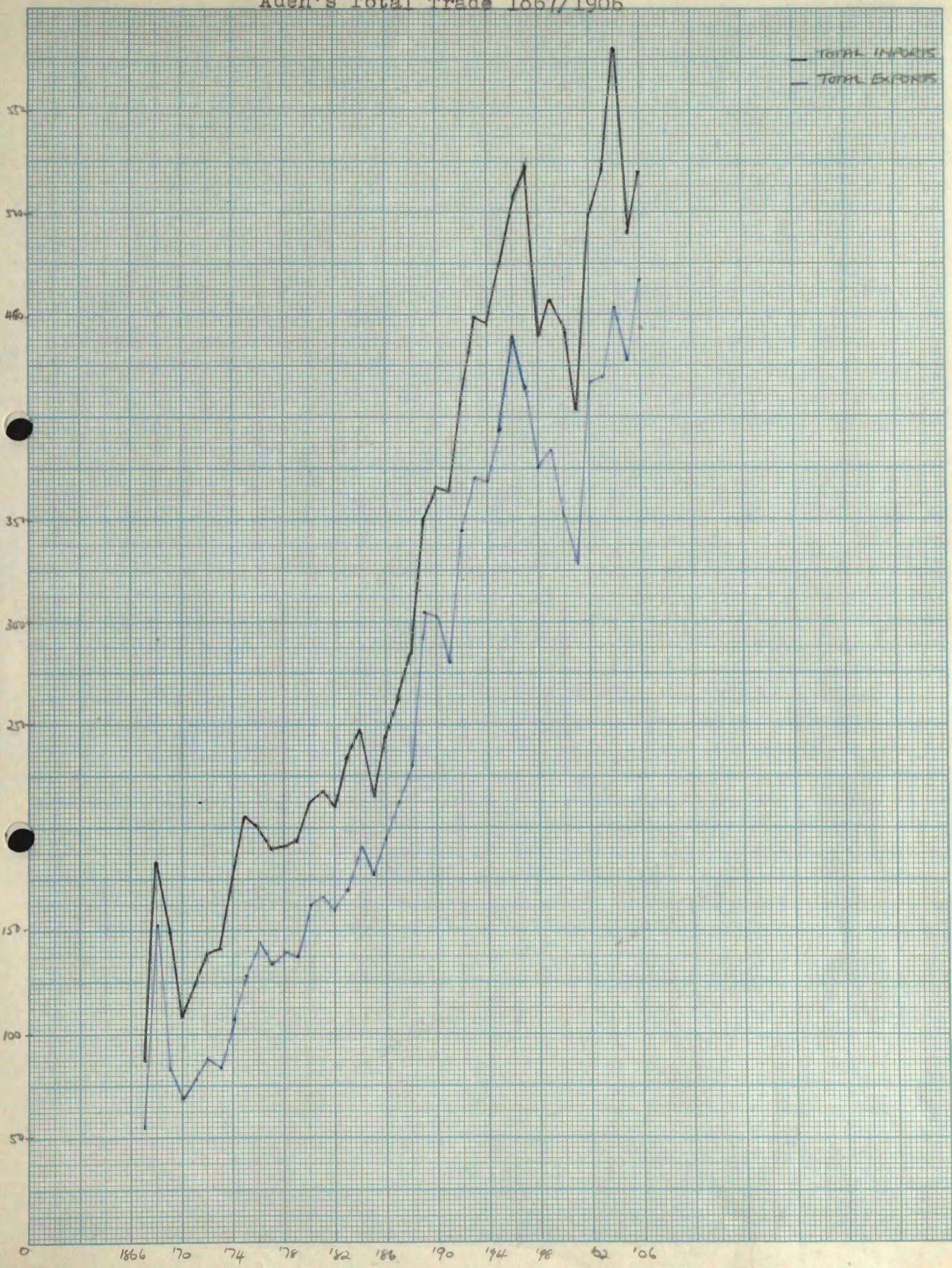
1966 1970 1974 1978 1982 1986 1990 1994 1998 2002 2006



Aden's Total Trade 1867/1906

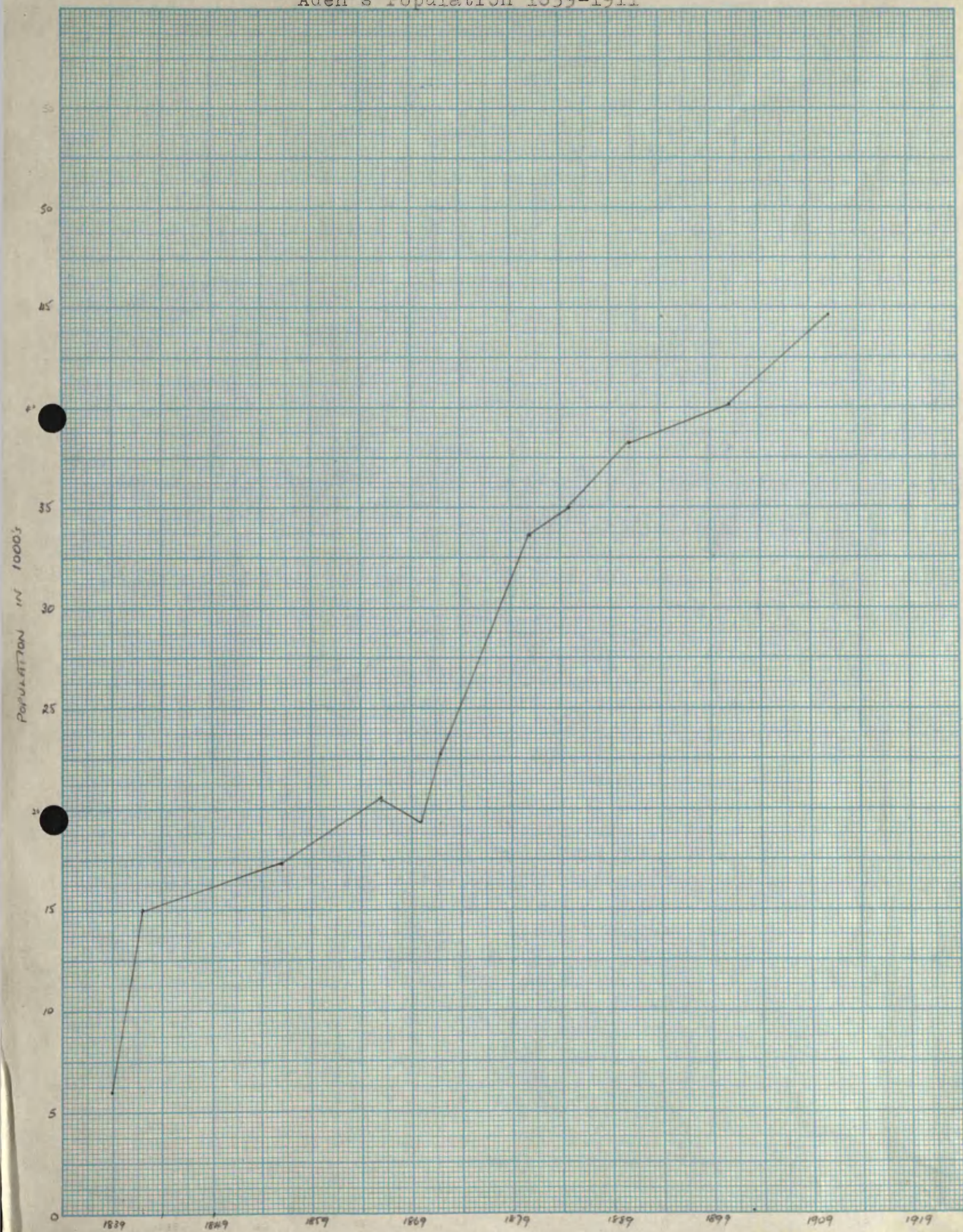
D

VALUE IN 100 000 RUPEES



Aden's Population 1839-1911

E



Egyptian evacuation of the Somali Coast, and of British intentions to safeguard British interests there without reference to the Porte (1).

Baring accepted Hunter's advice that Harrar should be evacuated; Baring recognised that Hunter's local knowledge of, and influence with, the Somalis were necessary to secure a peaceful Egyptian evacuation (2). But Baring never knew the local circumstances well enough to give Hunter any positive instructions (3). Baring declined the sole responsibility for sending Hunter on the dangerous mission to Harrar; that was the British Government's responsibility. '... The question ... appears ... to be very similar to ... the [decision to] despatch General Gordon to Khartoum ...' (2). There were other factors involved. Hunter had laid down certain conditions for securing Somali co-operation and his own participation in the rescue of the Harrar garrison by political negotiations (4). Berbera was to be occupied temporarily,

(1) FO 78 3725, FO - Dufferin, 29.5.84

(2) FO 78 3725, Baring - FO, 17.4.84

(3) CrP. Vol 5, Private Baring - Hunter, 9.6.85

(4) FO 78 3725, p.6.41 n.1 above

on behalf of the 'independent' Somalis, and the Egyptian officers were to be under Hunter's orders. Certain Egyptian officers were to be replaced. These requirements of Hunter's were not passed to the India Office until July (1). They were only proposals for Baring to consider and then to pass to the Foreign Office for approval.

The Foreign Office was responsible for Egyptian affairs, and if Hunter was employed to evacuate Harrar, as Gordon was being employed to evacuate the Sudan, both men should receive their orders from the Foreign Office. The India Office and the War Office were not initially involved in either operation. The Government of India had not proposed any occupation of Somali Coast territory. It was in favour of independence for the Somalis. The temporary administration of the coastal ports of Berbera and of Zeila was designed to help the Egyptian evacuation. Baring did not propose, and Hunter had not then suggested, the use of Indian troops. The India Office and the Foreign Office exchanged views, and agreed, in principle, on

(1) BSC, Off^g Pol Res - S of S, 5.7.84

Hunter's employment on the Somali Coast (1). But Egyptian agreement to the evacuation still had not been obtained late in June (1). The issue was a delicate one for Nubar Pasha, who had formed a new Ministry in January, 1884. Nubar needed to know how Harrar was to be evacuated, before he could accept an evacuation on the coast. It would be politically damaging for Nubar to evacuate Berbera and Zeila, leaving the Egyptian garrison at Harrar isolated; and it was questionable whether Zeila could be evacuated without Ottoman agreement, as it was leased from the Porte.

Decisions were taken quickly early in July: this action was partly due to Baring's submission of a Memorandum to the Foreign Office (2). Baring was then in England; and he wanted to obtain a British decision on the future of the Egyptian Gulf of Aden ports. The Egyptian ministers considered that action depended upon a British solution to the problem of Harrar. Baring made

(1) FO 78 3726, IO - FO, 8.5.84 and U/S FO Memo of 28.6.84

(2) FO 78 3726, Baring's Memo, 5.7.84

the following points:-

1. The Foreign Office should inform the India Office that Hunter needed no authority west of Zeila.

[Baring may not have realised that such an arbitrary division of Issa territory into two would encourage later Anglo-French differences when officials of each nation claimed to have made agreements with the Issa tribe.]

2. Lord Dufferin should ask the Porte to take early action to resume control over the Egyptian ports that were going to be evacuated. Failing an Ottoman reply within 14 days, the Porte should be warned that, if no immediate action was taken, independent arrangements would be made for Zeila and Tajoura. Baring advised that Tajoura should be left to the French and that Zeila should be temporarily occupied by the British.

3. Baring '... expected Hunter was right to propose a temporary occupation of Berbera ...'. Baring wanted a small force with naval support. The actual method of occupation should be arranged with the India Office, but Berbera should be defended against any Power.

4. Hunter should co-operate over the evacuation of Harrar.

5. The Egyptian authorities should be asked to arrange that their officers co-operated with Hunter and the Egyptians should explain their evacuation plans.

Baring's Memorandum relieved him of any direct responsibility for the forthcoming operation. That was placed upon the Egyptians and the India Office. Yet Baring claimed that the Egyptians wanted the British to decide on the evacuation plans. Plainly the Egyptians did: they lacked the military strength to evacuate Harrar by force, and, like Baring, they therefore had to rely on Hunter's local political skill with the Issa tribe. But Baring required the Indian authorities to plan operations on the Somali Coast for Hunter to implement. Yet Hunter had emphasized in April that a successful evacuation depended upon Egyptian co-operation with him (1). Baring alone could co-ordinate this Anglo-Egyptian operation. Because of his own ignorance of local conditions and his apprehension about the outcome, Baring tried to divert the responsibility elsewhere.

The Foreign Office had been concerned in June that

(1) p.6.41 n.1 and 2

Hunter's duties should be defined by the Indian authorities and then explained to the Egyptian Government (1). The Viceroy arranged, through the Bombay Government, for Hunter to negotiate with the Somali tribes east of Zeila; he questioned whether Hunter would need similar authority west of Zeila (2). Kimberley believed that the latter authority was not required (2). Granville made no comment. On 28th June, Kimberley agreed, at Hunter's request, that the local announcement of the Egyptian evacuation should be left to Hunter's discretion (3). As a possible encouragement to secure this discretion, Hunter had suggested that troops would probably not be required on the Somali Coast.

Kimberley was sent Baring's Memorandum of 5th July for comment, without any extra information from Egypt (4). He discussed the Memorandum with General Blair, who knew

- (1) FO 78 3726, IO - FO, 12.6.84, and FO Summary commenting on IO correspondence
- (2) FO 78 3726, Tel. Viceroy - S of S, 21.6.84, sent to FO, 24.6.
- (3) FO 78 3726, Viceroy's tel. of 28.6.84 - IO and IO - FO, 28.6.84
- (4) FO 78 3726, sent in a special dispatch box

little about Somali affairs (1). Blair believed that troops should be sent to Berbera; and that Hunter might be able to arrange the evacuation from Harrar. Kimberley's concerns were that Tajoura should not be left to the French (2) and that the Government of India should agree to pay any garrison expenses at Berbera. Granville then accepted Baring's proposals in the Memorandum, other than that of leaving Tajoura to the French (3). It was assumed that Lord Ripon and the Foreign Department would arrange Hunter's orders and the supervision of his actions.

The Viceroy, however, instructed the Governor of Bombay that Hunter should '... refer direct [to the India Office] for instructions ...' (4). Sir James

- (1) FO 78 3725, Hunter - Baring, 7.4.84, '... matters which he has not hitherto been called on to consider ...'
- (2) BSC 81/84, Vol V, Hunter, Off^g Res - S of S, 5.6.84, advocated handing Tajoura and Zeila to Menelik of Shoa, to prevent French occupation. Letter was a detailed survey of the need for British action at Berbera & Zeila
- (3) FO 78 3726, Note in File
- (4) FO 78 3726, tel. Gov.B^o - IO, 5.7.84

Fergusson noted that Hunter proposed '... to take 40 armed constables as escort [to Berbera] instead of troops ...' (1); he recommended '... considerable latitude to Hunter ...'. Plainly the Governor was sympathetic to Hunter's aims (2), and he warned Kimberley that Hunter believed that the Somalis expected a British administration in Berbera for a considerable time. Hunter had made his attitude clear to the India Office in June (3), in answer to the Secretary of State's Secret No 2 of 23 May, 1884.

Hunter opposed any foreign occupation; 'If the Turks go back to Zeila, they will eventually go on to Harrar ... It is not possible to measure the evils which will result to general commerce ...' then. A French or Italian occupation of coastal ports would also make difficulties, if it did not prevent the Egyptian evacuation of Harrar, because of the Somalis' hostile reaction. In Hunter's view; 'The only safe way of

(1) p.6.50 n.4

(2) Cf. p. 6.39 n. 2

(3) BSC 81/84, Vol V, Off^g Res - S of S, 5.6.84

arranging for the autonomy of the Somal will be by a temporary British occupation, in the manner suggested by Lord Kimberley' (1). The task of educating the Somal in self-government may [then] not prove impossible' (2).

The Foreign and India Offices accepted the Indian Government's rejection of responsibility for supervising Hunter's actions without remonstrance (3). The Acting Consul-General (4) was asked for details of the Egyptian plans for evacuation (5); and Hunter was warned that he should take no action to remove the Egyptian garrison without fresh instructions. The wheel had spun full circle back to Baring and Hunter, under the Foreign Office umbrella, although Kimberley had accepted a temporary occupation of Berbera for an indefinite period until self-

(1) Based on Hunter's proposals to Baring, p.6.41 n.1 and 2. Kimberley however advocated an Ottoman return to Zeila and Tajoura

(2) p.6.51 n.3

(3) FO 78 3726, FO - IO on IO draft tel. - Hunter, 12.7.84

(4) Mr. Edwin, later Sir Edwin, Egerton, 'locum tenens' in Baring's absence

(5) FO 78 3726, FO - Egerton, tel. of 17.7.84

government, and a possible occupation of Zeila if the Porte took no action there. Since Baring later admitted privately his dependence on Hunter (1), Gladstone's Government was drawn into an unintentional, permanent occupation of the Somali Coast by a course of action unobtrusively dictated by Hunter. He laid down requirements for arranging the evacuation of Harrar, and for lack of any alternatives his requirements were accepted. Only Egerton questioned the soundness of the policy (2). He '... venture [d] to suggest that our own exaggerated nervousness respecting the designs of foreign nations constitutes the gravest danger that threatens our country's interests ...' (2).

Hunter now dealt directly with the India Office on customary long term Indian interests, such as agreements with the Somali tribes, and with Baring for the immediate Egyptian requirements. In his dual roles as Officiating Resident and Consul on the Somali Coast he disposed of Aden's local resources to consolidate a 'temporary' British

(1) p.6.44 n.3

(2) FO 78 3726, Egerton - FO, 7.7.84

position on the Somali Coast under the Foreign Office. That position was adopted in conformity with official Indian wishes to see the Somali coast 'independent'. Only Egerton had possibly realised that the Somalis could not be independent and doubted whether it was in the British interest to underwrite that independence (1). Ripon and the Foreign Department may have feared that the Mahdis' success would encourage anti-foreign revolts elsewhere around the Red Sea. Sultan Abdul Hamid feared that (2). Gordon had forecast it (3). Since Gordon had served briefly as Ripon's Private Secretary, his predicament in, and his views on, the Sudan were unlikely to pass unnoticed in India. Ripon's rejection of responsibility for Somali Coast policy was possibly cautious foresight. The Mahdis' agents did try to make trouble there (4).

(1) p.6.53 n.2

(2) C&P, Vol 4, Northbrook - Granville, 28.12.83, describing Sultan's view

(3) Alan Moorehead 'The White Nile', London, 1960, p.217 quoting Pall Mall Gazette article and Times letter of Gordon's of 14.1.84

(4) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.297 and p.212; BSC 85/88, Res - SGB, 16.3.85

Hunter undertook not to 'buy' an Egyptian evacuation of Harrar, nor the administration of Berbera; '... as to money presents, the very sight of a dollar seems to upset the balance of the not naturally stable Somali mind - and I shall avoid the use ...' of cash presents (1). Hunter planned to hold Zeila securely by evacuating the Egyptian garrison and by keeping 100 Native Infantry aboard the I.G.S. 'Amberwitch' lying offshore supported by the guns of H.M.S. 'Arab' and H.M.S. 'Ranger' (1). Berbera was secured by a new Agreement with the Habr Awal (2). The Agreement was reluctantly accepted in London '... if absolutely necessary ...' (3). Hunter explained that the new Agreement, which forbade the Habr Awal to dispose of their territory except to the British, had been necessary because news of British plans on the

(1) BSC 81/84, Off^g Res - S of S, 5.7.84

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXXIX

(3) FO 78 3826, tel. Hunter - S of S, 12.7.84, and reply by tel. to Hunter, approved by FO. Note by Pauncefoote to Granville

Somali Coast had appeared in the Indian papers (1).

The Egyptian commander had approved Hunter's action.

Telegraphing news of the Habr Awal agreement, Hunter asked for authority for a British presence. '... No necessity for troops at Berbera. Proposed police sufficient. I await further instructions ...' (2). But there was no need for British intervention at Berbera, unless as part of the evacuation of Harrar. It was not then British policy to guarantee Berbera's independence nor to occupy the area. Hunter received no orders. Everything depended upon whether the Porte took over control on the African Coast.

On 15th July, the Foreign Office informed the India Office that, if the Porte failed to take action at Zeila, Hunter should be authorised to take action there as well as at Berbera (3). H.M.S. 'Arab' had been off the Somali Coast throughout July (4). She fired a Resident's salute of

(1) BSC 81/84, Offg Res - S of S, 15.7.84 and tel. of 12.7.84

(2) FO 78 3726, tel Offg Res - S of S, 15.7.84

(3) FO 78 3726, FO - IO, 15.7.84

(4) PRO Admiralty 53 12169, Log of H.M.S. 'Arab'

13 guns when Hunter landed at Berbera off I.G.S.

'Tenasserim' on 14th July, to arrange the new Habr Awal agreement. Since Berbera was still under Egyptian administration, the salute was unorthodox, but it emphasized to the Somalis Hunter's new importance in Berbera. It is probable that Hunter arranged for the salute; he arrived at 2.10 a.m. and the salute was fired at 6 a.m. when he landed. Hunter had worked closely with H.M.S. 'Arab' off Mukalla in 1881 (1); and the ship had been detailed for duty with him on the Somali Coast at Baring's request. On 24th July, H.M.S. 'Arab' carried out a practice drill at Berbera for a shore party of sailors and marines (2). H.M.S. 'Ranger' also stayed at Berbera from 4th July to 6th October. During that period she did four practice gun and musketry drills to impress the Somalis (3).

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(1) ADM 53 12153, Log of H.M.S. 'Arab', 15.2.81 - July 1882

(2) ADM. 53 12169, Log of H.M.S. 'Arab'

(3) ADM 53 15250, Log 4.7.1884 - 6.10.1884

Occupation of Zeila

Hunter was authorized, on 1st August, to reinforce the Zeila garrison and to '... occupy it without reference home if you consider step cannot safely be deferred ...' to keep it out of French hands (1). Instead of occupying Zeila, Hunter occupied Berbera, the Egyptian headquarters. Zeila was a subordinate station. Hunter could argue that his action was intended to be more effective than occupying Zeila itself. In his opinion, Zeila was less important to Aden and to the Somalis than Berbera (2). The action was nonetheless unauthorised (3). Hunter risked at least an official reprimand and possibly an early retirement or dismissal. He used the special Aden police detachment that he had begun to train in 1882 (4). His action was taken so hastily that Mr. L.P. Walsh's official orders as British

(1) FO 78 3726, Tel. Kimberley - Hunter, 1.8.84

(2) p.6.51 n.3 above. He was prepared for Menelik to occupy Zeila

(3) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.100

(4) p.6.36 n.1 above

Agent and Vice-Consul at Berbera were not issued until 27th August (1). It is possible that Hunter took action because he feared that a German detachment, or a French one (2), might be landed at Berbera as plans for the Egyptian withdrawal were known (3).

Walsh's instructions from Hunter noted that '... it has primarily to be borne in mind that both [Berbera and Bulhar] are independent and owned by the Somalis. Your functions are those of an administrator in a native state [There was, however, no native state, no paramount chief, and a largely nomadic population] You will arrange for the collection of the Customs (at Aden and on the spot): you will keep the peace of the ports, exercising the powers of a first class magistrate.

[Yet] you have no civil jurisdiction except over British subjects.!

'... You must avail yourself sparingly of authority to punish by fine and imprisonment: whipping should not

- (1) BSC 81/84, CSC Instructions - L.P. Walsh, 27.9.84, after General Blair's return from leave
- (2) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.100-101
- (3) p.6.56 n.1 above

be resorted to. [It was an unpopular Egyptian punishment.] Your sentences should be regulated by your means of enforcing them and special heed must be had to the avoidance of exciting any undue irritation (1). In fact you must not punish unless compelled to do so.'

Hunter concluded; '... It is impossible to give instructions to meet each particular point but your own good sense and judgement should supplement the foregoing remarks ... [for the] difficult and trying duties of British Agent and Vice-Consul at Berbera and Bulhar' (2).

The Habr Awal were required by treaty to '... assist all British officers in such duties as may be assigned to them and ... to act upon their advice [about] ... justice, the development of the resources of the country, the interests of commerce, or in any other matter in relation to peace, order and good Government and the general progress of civilisation ...' (3). Hunter had chosen his phrases to suit the situation in July, 1884. The treaty scarcely followed the pattern of the Socotra

(1) Cf. Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.281/2, p.254-264

(2) p.6.59 n.1

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXXIX

treaty, except in so far as both excluded foreign Powers (1). Hunter had claimed that the latter treaty would be his model (2). He knew that '... so long as the Somal have not got firearms they are easily dominated ...' (3). His intention was to rely upon Somali co-operation and the self-interest of the coastal tribesmen, not upon force, to hold Berbera and later Bulhar (4). The policy was effective so long as the coastal tribes feared inland tribes or foreign enemies and needed protection. Admiral Hewett, C. in C., E. Indies, who had recently been in command of a small force at Suakin after General Baker's disaster, considered Walsh's escort at Berbera completely inadequate (5).

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- (1) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXIII
- (2) FO 78 3726, Off^g Res - S of S, tel. 12.7.84
- (3) BSC 85/88, CSC - CG, Cairo, 14.12.85
- (4) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.235-236
- (5) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.221

Hunter painted an alarming picture, on 30th July, of increasing Issa antagonism to the Egyptians, and in particular, to the elderly Governor of Harrar, Ali Pasha (1). Hunter warned that the Pasha opposed an Egyptian evacuation as being against the Khedive's interests. Hunter asked for his removal and for clear instructions to other officers to co-operate in the evacuation, with the warning that they would be personally held responsible for disasters brought about by their own disregard of the policy adopted [in] ... Cairo ...'(1). Hunter's intention was probably to maintain pressure and a sense of possible crisis at the India Office in Kimberley's mind (2). Hunter had secured the Habr Awal treaty of 15th July, but he had not been authorised to establish any British presence on the coast. Without an evacuation, the official justification for occupying the coastal ports would disappear.

In Egypt, Nubar Pasha procrastinated over the evacuation of Harrar, claiming that the garrison was

(1) BSC 81/84 f 1110, Off^r Res - S of S ($\frac{1}{H}$) of 30.7.84

(2) Cf. p.3.97 n.1

self-sufficient, that their position was defensible, and that the Egyptians lacked the resources to arrange a mass evacuation through desert country (1). Evacuation would depend upon an unfavourable balance in the Egyptian accounts of expenditure and revenue from Zeila and Harrar. Nubar undertook to produce the accounts.

Hunter wrote a letter 5 days later to Kimberley urging the advantages of Zeila passing under British control (2). In Hunter's short-term view a temporary British occupation was necessary for the evacuation of Harrar. Kimberley had already approved that; and Hunter was arranging the administrative details with Egerton in Cairo (3). Hunter proposed delaying the despatch of a British administrator until the Egyptian authorities had warned their Governor there, AbuBakr Shermaki Pasha, to take orders from Hunter to ensure a peaceful evacuation of Harrar. The India Office and the Foreign

(1) FO 78 3726, tel. Egerton Ag. CG - FO, 21.7.84

(2) BSC 81/84, Off^g Res 3/2 - S of S, 4.8.84

(3) FO 78 3726, tel. CSC - CG Cairo, 2.8.84: copy passed by FO - IO, 2.8.84 'for information'

Office made no comment on Hunter's proposals. Kimberley had just approved in principle a British presence at Zeila (1). On 24th August, British '... Forces landed Zailah. Somalees impressed. Governor obliging ...' (2).

The Porte was warned by Lord Dufferin, on Foreign Office instructions, that the British expedition had left Aden for Zeila. Unless the Porte took action, Britain '... will find it necessary to take steps for the protection of ... [the Pashalik of Zeila] upon its evacuation by Egyptian troops ...' (3). Musurus Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador in London, had protested in July at an apparent British disregard for Ottoman suzerainty on the Somali Coast (4). The Egyptian flag continued to fly over Zeila, until 1888, and a token Egyptian force of 30 men remained on Baring's orders (5).

(1) p.6.58 n.1 above

(2) FO 78 3726, tel. Offg Res - S of S (R) CG, Egypt, 24.8.84

(3) FO 78 3727, Tel. FO - Dufferin, 22.8.84

(4) FO 78 3726, Musurus Pasha - FO, 23.7.84

(5) BSC 85/88, CSC 18.7.85 - S of S

But by February, 1888, Lord Salisbury considered that the times were 'inopportune' for Anglo-Ottoman discussions on the resumption of Ottoman control over Zeila. Lord Salisbury suggested that the Porte should, instead, assert its 'more definite and valid title' to French- and Italian-occupied areas on the African Coast (1). The Government's legal advisers recognised that the Porte had claims to Zeila, but that it was not '... judged ... advisable!..to differentiate between British claims to Zeila and to other parts of the coast (2).

The Egyptian authorities were alleged in 1896 to have notified the Porte on 19th November, 1884, of the Egyptian evacuation of the coast from Massawa southwards (3). British doubts about possible residuary Ottoman rights in Zeila still existed in 1896, but the customary Egyptian rent to the Porte was no longer paid (3). The

- (1) FO 78 4410, Salisbury - Sir W. White, HBMA Constantinople, 27.2.88
- (2) FO 78 4410, Letter - FO from Royal Courts of Justice, 13.5.89
- (3) IOL, Memo B74, para 5 by W. Lee-Warner IO, 25.11.96

British administration of Berbera began on the 3rd (1) October after the Egyptian forces had left (2). The evacuation of the Harrar garrison was completed in November, 1884 (3). 2018 men, women and children were evacuated; other Egyptians remained in the new Amir's service (4). Lord Cromer alleged later that 8359 persons were evacuated from Harrar (5).

British activity at Berbera and at Zeila provoked French irritation at Obokh, as French expansion to Sagallo, and later to Tajoura, provoked British irritation. A French Resident was appointed at Obokh at August (6). Obokh was opened as a new coaling depôt, in competition

(1) AAR 84/85, para 22

(2) A Times report of 9.10.84, published 16.10.84, suggests a departure date a few days later

(3) BSC 81/84, CSC - Baring, 4.11.84 and 17.11.84

(4) FO 78 4077, Hunter's Memo of 12.1.87 on Harrar - Baring forwarded to FO by Baring. The new Amir was related to the one executed by the Egyptians after their occupation

(5) Earl of Cromer 'Modern Egypt' 2 vols., London, 1908, (Hereafter Cromer 'Egypt') Vol 2 p.52

(6) BSC 81/84, Offg Res - SGB, 11.8.84

with Perim and Aden (1), and Issa coal coolies were recruited in Aden to work at Obokh. Coaling gangs in Aden harbour were recruited tribally and consisted of Arabs and Somalis. It may have been an accident that the French recruited Somalis from the nearest tribe, although the Issa had traditional enmity to the Danakil. It resulted in increasingly close French contacts with the Issa; and, since Somali marriage is exogamous, the French-Issa connection opened the neighbouring Gadabursi and Habr Awal tribes to French influence. Hunter sought, and obtained, permission from Baring in December to sign an agreement with the Issa (2), similar to his Habr Awal Agreement of July. British participation in the Egyptian evacuation of the Somali Coast was reported in 'The Times' on 16th October (3). At the same time the paper reported French difficulties at Obokh, due to the heat and the

(1) BSC 81/84, Tel. Hunter - Baring, 23.12.84

(2) IOL, BSC 81/84, Tels. CSC - Baring, 23.12.84 and 25.12.84 and Baring - CSC, 27.12.84, approved by FO, 26.12.84 (FO 78 3728 FO - Baring)

(3) 'Times' p.5

lack of local labour.

The new French Consul at Aden told Hunter on 28th October that France had annexed Dankali territory south of Obokh to the Issa border (1). A month later, the French Consul objected to Hunter that the chief of Tajoura had levied taxes on local trade. The Consul remarked that at Tajoura, where '... flotte le pavillon Français et où comme vous l'avez reconnu vous-même vous trouvenant en presence d'un fait accompli, vous ne pouvez, désormais, installer une douane anglaise ou égyptienne ...' (2). The pace of Anglo-French rivalry quickened. Zeila was placed under British control in October (3): Captain J.S. King was posted there from Aden on 24th October. British claims over the Moussa Islands and the island of Eibat (4) were 'unostentatiously' asserted by raising the

(1) BSC 81/84, tel. CSC, 28.10.84 - Baring

(2) BSC 81/84, Fr. Consul - Hunter and Hunter - French Consul, 28.11.84. The chief was levying personal tribute. He hoped to play off the French against the British

(3) BSC 81/84 f 1275, CSC - Res, 19.10.84

(4) p.6.4 n.3 and 4

Union Jack, in December, 1884. The French occupied Tajoura in November (2); an English eye-witness implied that the local Dankali chief, '... conveyed under an armed escort to the fort ...', was coerced into agreement (3).

The Foreign Office moved a step further and rejected the charade of British officials temporarily administering 'independent' Somali territory in November, 1884 (4), when approving Baring's approval of Hunter's instructions to Walsh of September (5). '... Bulhar and Berbera are under British protection [not independent] and ... it is important that this protectorate should be distinctly asserted ...'. Granville wanted foreign Powers to appreciate the position correctly (6). Baring informed

(1) BSC 81/84, CSC Instructions - Captain King, 13.12.84

(2) FO 78 3728, CSC - Baring, 20.11.84

(3) FO 78 3728, CSC - Baring, 13.12.84

(4) FO 78 3728, FO - Baring, 24.11.84

(5) p.6.59 n.1

(6) LA, M, PG, 1875-1896, No 9, 24.12.84, U/S H. Walpole

Hunter on December 6th (1).

Baring disliked '... the mingled control over these [Somali Coast] questions ... of the Indian Government and of [Granville] through myself ...' (2). Baring wanted Indian control over everything bar correspondence on Egyptian interests. Pauncefoote (3) supported Baring. Granville sent a copy to Kimberley, but no change was made. On 27th October, Baring wrote and telegraphed again, asking for a reply (4). Hunter was referring to Baring frequently on matters which Baring considered to be of Indian concern, unconnected with Egypt. Still no change was made. Baring returned to the question following Hunter's request for further instructions, after being notified that a British Protectorate had been accepted (5). In Baring's view, future policy was an

- (1) BSC 81/84, Baring - Hunter, 6.12.84, copied by GSC - Res, 17.12.84 and - S of S
- (2) FO 78 3727, Baring - FO, 16.10.84
- (3) FO Under Secretary
- (4) FO 78 3727, Baring - FO, letter & tel. of 27.10.84
- (5) FO 78 3728, Baring - FO, 17.12.84

Indian concern. In India, Lord Ripon disagreed (1).

The India Office did inform Hunter that no further action was required (2), but subsequent orders, such as approval for the new Issa treaty, continued to come from the Foreign Office through Baring. After Lord Dufferin replaced Lord Ripon as Viceroy, Indian control over Somali Coast affairs replaced the Foreign Office's late in January, 1885.

The India Office proposed that the Viceroy should control Somali Coast affairs and that the Foreign Office should continue control over Zeila affairs (3). Lord Ripon's rejection was a personal decision, not put to his Council. Its members were on tour (4). But Lord Dufferin, with the agreement of the Viceroy's Council, favoured Indian political control over the Somali Coast and Zeila, provided that the British Treasury underwrote any adverse balance of expenditure over revenue (4). It

(1) LI, tel. Viceroy - S of S, 8.11.84

(2) FO 78 3728, tel. IO - Hunter, 22.12.84

(3) LI, S of S - Viceroy, 7.11.84

(4) LI, tel. Viceroy - S of S, 14.1.85 in answer to
S of S tel. of 25.12.84

appears that the general objection was a financial one; that was maintained; the Somali Coast administration under India was always required to finance local expenditure (1).

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In August, 1885, the French Vice-Consul at Zeila, Monsieur J. Henri, informed his British counterpart there that a French Protectorate had been declared over the coast from Obokh, round the Bay of Tajoura, to 'Ras Jiberte' [Djibouti] (2). It included the Gadabursi tribal area inland. The French claim was based on a 'treaty', made on 11th March, 1882, by the French Consular Agent at Zeila, with nineteen Somali signatories, asking for French protection for their area against England. The British Vice-Consul replied that

- (1) AIA 1086, B^o Resolution 5656 of 10.9.90 signed by Lee Warner, commenting on the 1889/90 Somali Coast Administration Report
- (2) BSC 85/88, Br. Vice Consul Zeila - Ag Res and CSC, 24.8.85, enclosing Fr. Vice-Consul's letter of 21.8.85

Monsieur Henri was claiming for France '... large portions of territory at present under the direct protection and administration of the British Agent at Zeila ...' (1). The British Agent, Captain Mein, asked the French that no action should be taken locally until the British and French Governments had discussed the situation (1). On 29th August, an Assistant Resident, Captain King, visited Obokh aboard H.M.S. 'Sphinx', but he failed to reconcile the conflicting Anglo-French claims on the Somali Coast. King took over Mein's duties at Zeila.

King was concerned at the harmful effect on Zeila's trade, if the French established a new trading post, 9 miles west of R. Djibouti, at Khor Ambadu, which French warships had visited in June (2). The trade from Harrar and Abyssinia could be diverted to the new port. Late in September AbuBakr asked for French protection at Zeila (3); he was still, nominally, the Egyptian governor of Zeila,

(1) BSC, BA - Fr V-Consul, 24.8.85

(2) BSC 85/88, Zeila News Report of 5.9.85

(3) BSC 85/88, CSC 208 of 30.9.85 - CG Cairo. No written request was made

but his home village was in the new French Protectorate on the Bay of Tajoura. The French gunboat, 'Meteore', stationed at Obokh, called at Zeila to give 'moral support' and to land locally-recruited Dankali gendarmes as a guard for the French Vice-Consulate. Feeling at the time was running high in Zeila between the pro-French and pro-British Issa factions. The French Vice-Consul was asked by the British Agent to withdraw the gendarmes. They returned to Obokh aboard the 'Meteore'.

The French Consul asked Hunter on 29th September '... whether Zaila was really under British protection, or not', a somewhat difficult question to answer offhand. The Resident finally informed the French Consul that, if he chose to address the Resident in writing ... he would reply in writing ... (1)'. Relations were bad between France and Britain and the prospect of Anglo-French hostilities was mentioned (2). Hunter strongly opposed any cession of Issa territory. Relations between the British and French Vice-Consuls in Zeila deteriorated steadily throughout the year.

(1) p.6.73 n.3

(2) BSC 85/88, CSC - CG Egypt, 14.12.85

General Hogg (1) disliked the French officials along the Dankali Coast and the policy that they pursued. '... They are so full of bounce and so aggressive that protest is useless ...', Hogg wrote to Colonel Sir Owen Burne at the India Office, on 23rd February, 1887 (2). In Hogg's view, the French wanted Zeila badly, because it was the terminus for trade passing from, and through, Harrar, and the French could not open an alternative route to Obokh because of Dankali opposition and the harshness of Dankali country. The French therefore had to have access to Harrar through Somali territory. On 31st January, 1887, the French flag was hoisted at Dongarita, south of Zeila, in Issa territory, by a party from the French gunboat 'Meteore' (3). That re-emphasized the French intention to develop trade with Abyssinia, and certainly with the Harrar area. The French claim, based on support from some Issa tribesmen, was rejected locally by British officials and the dispute was referred

(1) Resident, Aden 1885-1890

(2) BSC 85/88, Vol VI, D/O letter, Hogg - Burne, 23.2.87

(3) BSC 85/88, Res - S of S, 5.2.87

to the British and French Governments for settlement in London and Paris. In the India Office view, the British Protectorate was considered as covering Dongarita, and the coast up to Zeila, from 31st December, 1884 (1).

In the summer of 1886 sailors from a French warship, together with the son of the French Vice-Consul at Zeila, were ambushed by Issa tribesmen, when they landed on the Issa coast of Tajoura Bay, at Ambadu (2). Some French retaliation was inevitable. In December, 1887, the French used that incident to establish a new post at Djibouti, a better anchorage than Obokh (3). The site was west of Zeila, uninhabited, and not on any existing trade route, but French intentions were plain. They declared that a free port would be established. That was intended to compete for Zeila's existing trade and to develop as a new entrepôt for Abyssinian trade. French

(1) Note by Lord Sandwich in BSC file. An 'English' flag had not been sent to Dongarita till 26.12.86

(2) The French had visited the site earlier

(3) BSC 85/88, Tel. Ag CSC - Baring, 1.12.87

intentions to establish a new caravan route from Ambadu had been reported as long before as September, 1885 (1), and the prospect had disturbed the British Agent at Zeila. French intentions were then linked with arms supplies delivered to Menelik through French-occupied Tajoura for the Shoan occupation of Harrar (2).

In Hunter's view, in June, 1887, there was no need for concern about French domination of the Abyssinian trade through Harrar (3). Hunter, in Aden, could assess developments more dispassionately than British officials living in relative isolation at Zeila, Bulhar, or Berbera, and identifying British interests with local feelings. Hunter was even prepared to accept that a French occupation of Harrar might not adversely affect British interests on the Somali Coast. Hunter did not '... believe that a free port under French auspices ... can compete successfully with one under British administration ... [on the Somali Coast] where moderate dues are levied ...' (3). Zeila was not important to Britain for its

(1) BSC 85/88, Zeila News Report of 5.9.85

(2) BSC 85/88, Zeila News Report of 16-25.9.85

(3) BSC 85/88, Memo of Hunter's of 2.6.87

trading revenue, which was all spent locally, but
'... to neutralise French influence and prevent its
becoming too potent a factor in Somali politics ...' (1).
For that reason, Hunter had been prepared to hand over
Zeila to Menelik in 1884 as an Abyssinian port (2).
British interests, in Hunter's view, were concentrated
on retaining control of Berbera, for its good anchorage,
and of access to Somali livestock exports.

Hunter's domination of Somali Coast affairs ended
with his transfer to India in 1888, arranged by Hogg as
a possibly jealous Resident, anxious to be rid of
Hunter, the Gulf of Aden expert (3).

Hunter's successor, Lt. Col. E.V. Stace, did not
share Hunter's indifference to French expansion into
Issa territory, or to Zeila's loss of the Harrar trade.
Stace considered (4) that any British acceptance of French
authority within Issa limits broke the letter and the

(1) p.6.77 n.3

(2) BSC 81/84 f 987, Off^g Res - S of S, 1884

(3) p.10.43 n. 2.

(4) BSC 85/88, CSC - Res Aden, 25.3.88

spirit of the Issa Agreement of 1884 (1). By that Agreement the Issa agreed not to cede any of their territory to any foreign power bar Britain. Stace considered that the French were masking their intention of developing a branch route, off the Zeila - Gildessa - Harrar caravan route, to Djibouti. Such a route, with adequate water supplies, through the coastal range existed (2). The French claimed to be ignorant of it.

Stace was supported by the Resident, General Hogg. Hogg had been opposed to any French expansion into the Somali area in February, 1887, believing that, without a wider local base, the French would evacuate the area as a profitless one (3). However, in February, 1888, the French Foreign Minister, Monsieur Waddington, agreed with Lord Salisbury to a demarcation of the Anglo-French boundary (4). That confirmed British authority (5) at Dongarita and French authority at Djibouti. It also

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' XCIV

(2) BSC 85/88, CSC - CG Cairo, 2.1.88

(3) p.6.75 n.2

(4) FO 78 4410, Letter of 2.2.88

(5) p.6.76 n.1

laid down that neither Power would attempt to obtain control over Harrar, unless a third Power intervened in that area, when either France or Britain would be free to take whatever measures each decided upon.

The French policy was to extend trade to Abyssinia through Harrar, from Obokh and Djibouti. Official British policy was little concerned to develop trade links with Menelik of Shoa; but it was concerned to reduce arms trafficking in the Gulf of Aden, and on the Somali Coast (1). French traders and an Abyssinian were allowed to ship, in transit through Aden, 2847 rifles, 3000 muskets and 2234 shotguns, with correspondingly large quantities of cartridges and percussion caps (2). Other French arms supplies were shipped direct to Obokh from Europe. The Resident asked the Secretary of State to enlist French and Italian Government support '... for the restriction of the trade in arms on the Red Sea and on the Somali Coast ...' (3) and to reconsider

(1) Regulated by the Indian Arms Act No XI of 1878

(2) BSC 85/88, Res - S of S, 22.2.86

(3) BSC 85/88, Res - S of S, 23.2.86

whether arms should be allowed to be transhipped in Aden. French arms imports to Obokh were sold to Shoa, for ivory and other local produce. The Resident was concerned that some arms would reach the Dankalis and the Somalis (1). In general Menelik of Shoa, and his nephew, Ras Makonen, at Harrar, were not allowed to import arms through Aden and Zeila, but exceptions were occasionally made, because of the unrestricted French trade in arms to Shoa (2).

French officials were concerned that Italy should be a party to any agreement banning arms-trafficking (3). The reason was obvious. The French were concerned that their influence with Menelik, as his arms suppliers, should not pass to the Italian colonies in Eritrea. In

(1) p.6.80 n.2

(2) BSC 89/96, Res - SGB, 3.1.93, reported a permit for Ras Mekonan of 200 riles and 20,000 cartridges

(3) FO 78 4260, Lord Lytton, H.M. Amb. Paris - FO, 2.2.89, quoted in FO - Dufferin, 9.3.89

principle, the Italian Government was in favour of such a tripartite agreement (1). But, in practice, the Italians later came to ask for exceptions to the ban. The demand for arms existed and Menelik's domination over, and expansion farther into, Galla territory depended upon his maintaining his superiority in weapons. Neither the French nor the Italians nor the British could exercise any effective control over local craft along the coasts of their Protectorates. Smuggling arms into the Yemen, for the Zaidis fighting the Ottomans, and into Africa, for Menelik (2), was profitable and it flourished widely. British officials claimed that Obokh was, later, the centre for arms smuggling in the area. It is possible that the French never stopped the trade; and that the British, who had an interest in preventing it in the Yemen which the French lacked, never appreciated the practical difficulty of preventing, as opposed to controlling, arms shipments from other foreign countries.

(1) FO 78 4260, Italian Amb London - Sir Julian Pauncefote, U/Sec, FO

(2) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.259-260

The French construction of the Djibouti-Harrar railway confirmed Djiboutis position as Abyssinia's export port and made it impossible for France to ban arms imports to Menelik without offending him. Since further French agreements were made with Menelik France had an interest in securing his position by continued arms supplies. The French concession for a railway was secured from Menelik in 1894 (1). In reporting the concession the Resident at Aden noted that the French intention was to divert Abyssinian trade to Djibouti from the Nile route (2). But the construction of the railway was not without problems for the French.

The Issa, through whose territory the line lay to Gildessa, objected to alternative transport to their camel caravans. Benefits from the line would benefit their Shoan enemies, to their own loss. But the French overrode Issa objections by a combination of bribery and threats, and work on the line continued (3). By

(1) FO 1/41 (Abyssinian Railway, 1896-1902) H.M. Amb.

Paris - FO, 22.7.97, forwarded a copy

(2) BSC 89/96, Vol VI, SC Memo of 28.8.94 forwarded to S of S by Res, 28.8.94

(3) BSC 97/99, Res & CSC of 16.8.97

1897, 2 locomotives and 40 wagons were working on the line. In 1898, the Under Secretary at the India Office minuted on a further report on French progress by the Resident (1); 'No doubt the French have scored ... I expect that the [Somali] coast will cost more to the Foreign Office than its worth! (2). It is probable that British feeling was influenced by the prevailing Francophobia (3). Indeed Lord Salisbury considered (4) a proposal (5), originating from Aden, that Treasury Funds should be used to buy out the railway company. But the time was not propitious; money was wanted for the Shire railway and for Uganda; and Lord Salisbury did not wish to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer until the prospect was more favourable.

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- (1) BSC 97/99, Res & CSC - S of S, 4.6.98
- (2) Responsibility was transferred to the Foreign Office in 1898
- (3) Differences over Egypt, Fashoda, & British sympathy for Dreyfus
- (4) FO 1/41, Memo of 8.10.99 in red ink
- (5) FO 1/41, Memo by Lt. J.L. Harrington after a mission to Menelik

Section 7. Aden Residency Relations with the Abdali
 and some nearer Yemeni Tribal Chiefs

1874 - 1901

The relationship of the Abdali Chiefs and the Residents

The Abdali chief was a British client, with considerable independence of action. The relationship was preserved because the alternative, Ottoman suzerainty, was unacceptable to the Abdali chief. That was also distasteful to the British. Sometimes the chief resented British demands; occasionally, he was coerced into action which he disliked; and, on occasions, he successfully evaded the Resident's demands. Throughout, the initiative for British action came from the Resident, not from the Foreign Department. Indian Government policy aimed at avoiding any increased commitments in the Yemen, but Residents generally wished to exert British influence.

Successive Abdali chiefs were able to use their connection with the Residency to increase their local influence. They were also customary intermediaries between the Ottoman-claimed Yemeni tribes and the British. In

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their own area, Abdali chiefs developed increasingly despotic tendencies; they were able to increase their incomes by the introduction of profitable local monopolies and by the exploitation of their territory's agricultural resources (1). They were suzerains, not tribal leaders, protected from outside interference, or from internal revolts, by British self-interest, as that was understood by the Aden Residency.

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How Fadhl bin Ali became the Abdali chief

Fadhl bin Ali succeeded to the Abdali chiefship on 6th July, 1874, by virtue of the support of his uncle, Muhammad bin Mohsin, and of the Resident's recognition (2). Muhammed waived his own strong claims, and secured the quick approval of the members of the ruling family present in Lahej, to Fadhl's accession (3). The pro-Ottoman

(1) Cf Belhaven 'Road' p.116

(2) See p. 7.15 n.1

(3) AIA 643 f 469, Fadhl bin Ali - Schneider, rec'd 20.7.74

members of the family were in voluntary exile in Aden. They were not informed of Fadhl bin Mohsin's death at midnight on 4th July until after his successor's election on the 6th, in which they had not played their traditional part! Amongst the exiles was Abdullah bin Mohsin, who, as the eldest male member of the family, had a traditional claim to consideration for the chiefship. Fadhl bin Ali's appointment was recognised by the Resident on the same day (1). That recognition carried great weight locally (2).

Fadhl bin Ali was fully aware of the pressure that the Resident could apply. Major W. Merewether had assisted in the settlement of 1863 by which Fadhl bin Ali was replaced by his uncle, Fadhl bin Mohsin. The new chief was apprehensive about his own safety and about his relatives' ability to excite tribal opposition to his succession. After one unannounced, and frightening, family visit, Fadhl bin Ali asked Schneider to forbid the Abdali exiles in Aden to visit Lahej without prior warning (3).

(1) AIA 643 f 415, Res - Private Secretary to Gov B^o

6.7.74

(2) See p. 7.15 n.1

(3) AIA 643 f 469, Fadhl bin Ali - Schneider, rec'd 20.7.74

Schneider obliged; and the exiles were warned that '... if they ever create a disturbance in Lahej, they will be severely punished ...' (1). That was reassuring for Fadhl, but contrary to the Indian Government's policy of non-intervention. Schneider's warning was, however, unlikely to become officially known, or to need to be implemented. The warning was probably conveyed by word of mouth, and not by letter, so that the Ottoman authorities would be unable to provide confirmation of British intervention. The Ottomans did complain (2); but their complaint was ignored by the Foreign Office. So long as the Abdali chief feared assassination, or a 'coup d'état' by his relatives, he remained a client of the Residency. Only after the death of his two rival uncles in 1881 could Fadhl disagree with the British with some safety.

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(1) AIA 643 f 474, Res - Fadhl bin Ali dated 22.7.74

(2) PRO FO 78 2755 f 274-275, Elliot's despatch No 241 of 17.10.74 - FO

The Abdali sale of Shaikh Othman

The military authorities considered that Aden's growing civilian population could be a liability to feed in any future siege of Aden, and that it was a potential threat to military security. They therefore wanted to move non-essential civilians out of Aden and to acquire territory for a new settlement from the Abdali chief (1). A new file was opened at the Residency in 1880 dealing with this development at Imad and at Shaikh Othman (2).

Major General F.A.E. Loch claimed that '... it was entirely through Mr Salih Jaffir's clever and able executions ...' that the British '... obtain[ed] possession of Shaikh Othman ...' (3). Loch may have exaggerated slightly. Indeed, the British had not then occupied Shaikh Othman; '... negotiations ... regarding the form of the deed of sale of Shaikh Othman, etc., as also the [Abdali] Fadhli boundary question ...' (4) were still

(1) AIA 876, G of I No 192, M.D. - S of S, 9.6.79

(2) AF R/20 (AIA 876) had this file incorporated in it

(3) AIA 854, Res - SGB, 3.1.81

(4) p.7.7 n.4

proceeding (1). But Salih Jaffer had started action when he arranged a loan agreement on 11th June, 1878 (2). The Abdali chief was advanced money from the Residency for the wedding expenses of two of his cousins, on the condition that he would sell the Shaikh Othman area, if the Government of India wanted it, for ~~£~~MT25,000 (3). A further advance of RS3,600 was made for the Hajj expenses of two of the chief's uncles in 1880 (4). They travelled at Fadhl bin Ali's expense with Salih Jaffer. The suggestion of the pilgrimage, to the most influential uncle, Muhammad bin Mohsin, may have been officially inspired. Salih Jaffer's journey with them was a duty journey, not leave (5).

(1) AAR 80/81 para 17

(2) The chief had heavy expenditures of RS20,000 in Subaihi territory in 1877 and of RS7,000 in 1879. AIA 855 f 59, Memo on Abdali Subaihi interests

(3) RS55,000

(4) AIA 876, Res - SGB, 3.1.81

(5) AIA 833, Salih Jaffer's leave application, 14.4.80, noted no leave from 1870-1880

The Government of India favoured the purchase of Shaikh Othman in June, 1879 (1), but that was delayed by the Secretary of State '... until a more convenient financial season ...' (2). Loch considered that the delay might postpone the sale indefinitely (3). However, funds for the purchase were approved in November, 1880 (2). By then, Fadhl and his uncle, Muhammad, wished to withdraw from the sale. Loch believed that the Abdalis hoped to renegotiate a higher price later, recognising that the British were bound to acquire Shaikh Othman in time (3). Loch had obtained official authority to give a bribe of RS1,000 to the Qadhi of Lahej so that he, as the principal Abdali intermediary, had an interest in the sale (1).

Loch was officially pessimistic in January, 1881, about the possibility of securing Abdali agreement (4).

(1) AIA 876 f 22, G of I No 192 MD - S of S

(2) AIA 876, Quoted in B^o Resⁿ No 5995 of 10.12.80
forwarded to Res with G of I 3580 E.P. of 12.11.80
- SGB

(3) AIA 876, Res - SGB, 18.11.80

(4) AIA 876, Res - SGB, 25.1.81, Cf. with p.7.5 n.3

Possibly he hoped to buy more time by pessimism. In a note to Hunter, three days before, Loch described Fadhl's obstructions as '... most impertinent ...' (1). Loch proposed to annex Shaikh Othman, despite the absence of any agreement with Fadhl on the extent of the area to be annexed. Loch first planned to warn Fadhl that the area would be officially occupied, with proclamations and gun salutes, so that Fadhl could sign a deed of sale beforehand (1). But, in his letter to Bombay, Loch asked for approval to present Fadhl with a 'fait accompli' (2). The Bombay Government approved Loch's suggestion on 3rd February (3). Loch, however, continued negotiations with the Abdali chief, warning him of his intention to occupy and annex the territory (4). Fadhl complained that '... the sale of the border territories was like the taking of the soul from the body ...' (5).

(1) AIA 876, Loch Memo of 22.1.81

(2) p.7.7 n.4

(3) AIA 876, Tel. SGB-Res

(4) AIA 876, Res - Fadhl Ali, 16.2.81

(5) AIA 876, Fadhl Ali - Res, received 6.2.81, translated from the Arabic

Contemporary Muslim opinion condemned the surrender of Muslim territory to Christian countries, and Fadhl was a devout Muslim (1).

Fadhl was also required to give up his claims to Imad, 10 miles east of Aden. He denied any obligation to do so (2). But Loch brushed aside Fadhl's refusal; '... You have not only signed the agreement for the sale of the district of your own free will ... but have still further confirmed the sale by receiving from us RS20,000 as earnest money ... You are bound to lose no time in giving over Shaikh Othman ... Regarding Emad you should know that we have never recognised your ... title ...' (3). Major Hunter was as determined as the Resident that the sale of the whole Shaikh Othman area should proceed. Hunter commented on Fadhl's objections over Imad; (4) '... Saleh [Jaffer] might go out ... settle that businessAt any rate Imad is not [Fadhl's] and

(1) Doughty 'Deserta' Vol II p.540

(2) AIA 876, Fadhl Ali - Res, 4.2.81

(3) AIA 876, Res - Fadhl Ali, 7.2.81

(4) p.7.8 n.5

Major Goodfellow told him so ...' (1). Both the Abdali Qadhi (2) and Muhammad bin Mohsin (3) considered British pressure unreasonably harsh. Muhammad complained that he was being criticised locally for the sale (3). It is possible that he had originally considered the exchange of infertile land at Shaikh Othman for a vaster and agriculturally more valuable area of Subaihi land (4) as good business.

Loch agreed to Fadhl's request to postpone the British annexation briefly, to give Fadhl time to remove any Abdali opponents to the annexation from the area. The annexation was officially proclaimed on 24th February (5). According to British sources, local reactions were favourable. This was understandable; Fadhl and his uncle were selfish rulers. However, the draft sale agreement

(1) AIA 876, Hunter's comments on Fadhl's letter (p.7.8 n.5)

(2) AIA 876, Qadhi - Salih Jaffer on 10.2.81

(3) AIA 876, Muhammad in P.S. to Fadhl's letter - Salih Jaffer, received 13.2.81

(4) See p.7.42 n.1

(5) AIA 876, Res - SGB, 8.3.81

was not signed until May; Fadhl 'fell sick' on the way to Aden and deputed his uncle Muhammad to sign on his behalf (1). The Aden file contains no copy of this agreement. However, the official agreement of 7th February, 1882 (2), did contain additional clauses (3) embodying points which the Qadhi had requested in February, 1881 (4). The Bombay Government prematurely welcomed '... the acquisition by purchase from the Sultan of Lahaj of ... Shaikh Othman ... as the most important event ...' in the Aden Annual Report for 1880/81 (5).

Muhammad bin Mohsin had brought with him to Aden Fadhl bin Ali's brother, Ahmad, and Fadhl's cousin, Ahmad bin Fadhl (6); both witnessed the Abdali-Haushabi agreement (7), and the Subaihi agreement (8), which Muhammad signed on behalf of the Abdali chief, at the same time.

(1) AIA 876, Fadhl bin Ali - Res, 1.5.81

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' XXIV

(3) n.2 Articles 5,6,7

(4) AIA 876, Qadhi - Salih Jaffer, 10.2.81

(5) AIA 853, Bo Govt Resn 3696 of 8.8.81 on para 17 AAR

(6) Abdali chief, in succession to Fadhl, 1898-1914

(7) Aitchison 'Treaties' XXII

(8) Aitchison 'Treaties' XXIII

English translations were forwarded to Bombay (1). Loch admitted that a delicate situation was produced by opposition aroused by the agreements. The nature of the opposition was not specified; but Loch was not prepared to aggravate it. He consequently decided to postpone his plan to transfer the Abdali customs house from Crater to Khor Maksar, or to Shaikh Othman to a more opportune time (1).

The simultaneous signature of the three agreements has all the appearances of a package-deal; the Abdalis made concessions to the Haushabis and to the British (2); in return, the Resident offered the Abdalis assistance to purchase arms for the control of the independent Subaihi area and recognised Abdali sovereignty there. The prior approval of the Foreign Department should have been obtained to the Subaihi Agreement (3). It involved local arms sales, which were contrary to official policy, and

(1) AIA 855 f 15, Res - SGB, 17.5.81. There is no file copy of this draft Shaikh Othman agreement

(2) p.7.11 n.2 and n.7

(3) AIA 855 f 109, Res 224 - SGB mentions For. Dept. criticism

an imprudent recognition of Abdali sovereignty, over areas which the British did not know, and over tribesmen who did not want Abdali rule.

In the official Shaikh Othman Agreement of 1882, Britain undertook to protect the Abdalis and Abdali Dependencies (1). It is possible that prior agreement would have been refused by the Foreign Department; yet without Subaihi 'compensation', it is unlikely that any Abdali faction would have accepted the sale of Shaikh Othman. Loch was pessimistic in January 1881 (2). Even in May, 1881, the Abdali agreements were not recorded as being sealed with Fadhl's seal, which would have implied Fadhl's endorsement of his uncle's signature. But, in the confusion of Fadhl's 'sickness', the seal might have been forgotten.

Muhammad's authority for signing the agreements was a letter from his nephew to the Resident, giving '... full power to sign the agreement of Shaikh Othman, the Howshabee and the Subaihees ...' (3). One unexplained incident

(1) Article 7

(2) p.7.7 n.4

(3) AIA 876, Fadhl Ali - Res, 1.5.81

occurred after the draft agreements had been signed, and the balance of the purchase money had been paid to Mohammad at his nephew's request (1). A payment of Rs300 was paid to one Seiyid Abdul Bari (2), out of the Rs1,000 originally earmarked for payment to the Lahej Qadhi for his services in securing the agreement (3). A Seiyid Abdul Bari was in the Abdali chief's service in 1876; he was possibly a clerk or secretary to the chief (4). Loch did not want any queries about his authority for making this payment. On Loch's orders the Qadhi signed for Rs1,000, although receiving only Rs700. This illegal breach of financial regulations confirms Loch's determination, and Residency senior staff's willingness, to use unorthodox means where expedient. It is therefore possible that Residency officials were unscrupulous about the manner in which the Shaikh Othman agreement was obtained in February, 1882.

(1) p.7.13 n.3

(2) AIA 876, Salih Jaffer - Loch, 9.5.81, Loch - Salih Jaffer, 10.5.81

(3) p. 7.7 n.1

(4) AIA 833 f 1145

Relations between Fadhl and his uncle Muhammad deteriorated quickly after the signing of the draft agreements in May. In July, the Qadhi of Lahej called on Hunter and enquired whether the Residency would support a 'coup d'état' in favour of Muhammad (1). The Qadhi was told that the Resident might intervene, if the coup was abortive, '... at least temporarily upholding the Sultan ...', but that he would not oppose it if successful. The reasons for this internal Abdali quarrel were not given. It is possible that the quarrel developed because Muhammad signed the agreements at Aden (2). Hunter's sympathy was with Muhammad, whose death from fever in October, 1881, was described as 'a heavy loss' to British interests (3). No 'coup' had occurred in the meantime.

In Loch's opinion in October, 1881, Muhammad's

- (1) AIA 855, Hunter's Report of 12.7.81 - Res on Qadhi's visit
- (2) It is possible that Seiyid Abdul Bari forged a letter of authority by Fadhl bin Ali, or tricked him into signing one, for Muhammad bin Mohsin
- (3) AAR 1881/2

agreements were unlikely to be ratified by his nephew (1). Yet Muhammad had allegedly signed on Fadhl's behalf, unless Fadhl's authorisation had been obtained by a subterfuge possibly involving Seiyid Abdul Bari (2). Muhammad's death placed Loch in an embarrassing position. The Residency accounts were debited with a payment totalling RS55,000 for the purchase of Shaikh Othman, which Fadhl might repudiate. Loch was responsible for paying the balance of that purchase price; and possibly Loch might have been required to refund Government money, if he had taken too much for granted. Development work began in Shaikh Othman, after the declarations of annexation in 1881, to lay out a township for Aden's surplus civilian population. The money thus spent on public works was likewise at risk, if the Abdali chief denied that he had authorised the sale. The Aden files make no reference to these possible embarrassments; the subject was not one which would be placed on the files. But if the situation

(1) AIA 855, Res - SGB 307 - of 24.10.81 referring to the Subaihi agreement, but probably applicable to Shaikh Othman too. See p. 7.11 - 7.12

(2) See p. 7.14 n. 2

did exist, it had to be regularised. Loch was due to leave Aden in March, 1882. His successor might not accept an ambiguous situation without making some official comment. That would possibly lead to an enquiry and bring into the open embarrassing irregularities (1). Loch's conduct of affairs at Mukalla had recently been criticised (2). Loch had probably relied upon the local experience of his subordinates, Hunter and Salih Jaffer, who were as committed to the occupation of Shaikh Othman as he was.

Despite Residency complaints (3) about Fadhl bin Ali's unreasonable behaviour after his uncle's death~~s~~, and Fadhl's stronger position then, the Residency reported that '... the deed of sale [for Shaikh Othman] ... was duly signed on the 7th February, 1882 ...' (4). The contemporary Aden file does not explain why the Abdali chief dropped his opposition and signed the agreement (5).

(1) e.g. p.7.14 n.2

(2) p.4.82 n.1 and 2

(3) AIA 855, Res - SGB, 29.10.81

(4) AAR 81/82 para 10

(5) AIA 876

It is possible that the Agreement was signed willingly. A signed copy exists, but the signature of Fadhl bin Ali there is not the usual signature on contemporary letters to the Residency (1). It was as simple but not as firm as customary, and it lacks the diacritical points. Such differences could be due to Fadhl's emotion at the time, or to other causes. It seems unlikely that any forger would have been so clumsy as to omit the diacritical points. But it is strange that the Abdali ratification of the treaty was not reported until 27th May, 1882, and then only after a coded telegraphic enquiry had been received from Bombay (2). Probably such important news would not have been delayed unless something was missing.

The published wording of the signatories to the treaty was unusual; it was officially published as being 'Signed in vernacular, Sultan of Lahej and Dependencies'. That phraseology was not unique (3): but it was more

(1) AIA 876 f 240

(2) AIA 876, Coded tel. Res - SGB, 27.5.82, in answer to coded tel.

(3) Cf. Aitchison 'Treaties' No LXXIII of 23.1.76, Mahri treaty

customary to write the name of the local signatory. All such signatures were in Arabic. It is possible that the entry was in deference to Fadhl bin Ali's wishes, but it also left it ambiguous whether the signature was Sultan Fadhl's, or an agent's. The treaty emphasized that the sale was '... in consideration of the sum of dollars (25000) twenty-five thousand already received ...' (1). No mention was made of Muhammad bin Mohsin having received the money. Possibly Fadhl's signature was required as an official receipt. Loch refused to submit the Subaihi agreement to Fadhl for ratification (2), because Loch anticipated an embarrassing refusal (3). Yet the Shaikh Othman draft agreement was signed under similar circumstances to the Subaihi draft agreement. The earlier agreements were not authenticated by Fadhl bin Ali's seal. This later ratification was.

(1) Article 1

(2) 'Aitchison' Treaties No XXIII

(3) AIA, Loch - SGB, 10.1881. Possibly Muhammad was the main supporter of the Subaihi agreement which Fadhl was in no way committed to

The Abdali chief's signature (1) was recorded as being made at Shaikh Othman on 6th February, before Major Hunter and the Qadhi of Lahej. General Loch signed at Aden, only 10 miles away, on 7th February before the same two witnesses. No explanation was given why the Resident and the Abdali chief did not sign in each other's presence. The published version does not state whose seal was affixed against the local signatures. It was Fadhl bin Ali's. The wording of the published version possibly implied that the vernacular signature witnessing the Resident's signature on the 7th was that of Fadhl bin Ali. In fact, it was that of the Lahej Qadhi (2).

A provocative postscript to this riddle involves the refrain of a traditional Abdali children's song; 'The Sultan's seal is lost. Look for it, oh slaves' (3).

(1) The signature is a very simple one, suggesting that the chief was not very literate.

(2) AIA 876 f 240 Original

(3) J. Knox-Mawer 'The Sultans came to Tea' p.142, London, 1961, quotes 'the Sultan's ring is lost ...'. خاتم
can mean either 'ring' or 'seal', Wehr's Dictionary p.227

It is possible that Fadhl bin Ali's seal was 'borrowed'. Whether the signature of the agreement was acquired by trickery, Shaikh Othman was acquired by British pressure. That would account for Fadhl's later consistent lack of co-operation with the British until his death. He was recorded as visiting Aden only once between April 1881 and March 1882 (1). That is inconsistent with a customary annual visit to the Resident and a visit to Shaikh Othman to sign the agreement. The discrepancy can be explained as a mistake in the Annual Report, or by Fadhl bin Ali not having visited Shaikh Othman on February 6th, or by a precise limitation of 'Aden' to the town and not to the extended settlement including Shaikh Othman. In the absence of proof to the contrary, the Shaikh Othman agreement must be accepted as a genuine agreement voluntarily signed by the Abdali chief. In 1892, Fadhl compared his own acquisition of the Seila (2) area from the Aqrabi Shaikhdome by force to the British

(1) AAR 1881/82 para 10

(2) AIA 1114, Memo by Lt. Col. Stace on a meeting with Fadhl of 7.2.92

seizure of Aden from him by force (1). The British did not seize 'Aden' from Fadhl bin Ali. They did seize Shaikh Othman, by their ability to use force. It is possible that Lt. Col. E.V. Stace, talking through an interpreter, later wrote 'Aden' when Fadhl had referred to Shaikh Othman. Whether that was so or not, Fadhl recognised that, locally, might was right. He had to accept British expansion.

None of the correspondence on Shaikh Othman between Aden and Bombay was copied to the India Office between 1881 and 1882; the India Office file contains, however, considerable correspondence on Somali Coast affairs (2). The Government of India did not notify the Secretary of

(1) Letters to the last Sultan, Ali bin Abdul Karim, and to Sharif Hussain bin Ahmad alHabili, formerly of Beihan, and now in Saudi Arabia, asking for family reminiscences on the incident, and on the song, have not been answered.

(2) L/P&S/9 (BSC 81/84)

State of the successful conclusion of negotiations until September, 1882 (1). It was not until November that Musurus Pasha, the Ottoman Ambassador, complained of '... : agrandissement territorial chez les agents de Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Brittanique à Aden ... par l'achat des terrains d'une vaste étendue à l'est d'Aden ...' (2). No notice was taken of the Ottoman protest, which emphasized that the Porte had not surrendered its own claims to Lahej, and, by implication, to all S.W. Arabia bar Aden (3).

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Abdali expansion at Haushabi expense, in December, 1873, ensured complete Abdali control over the headworks of the Abdali irrigation system and greater protection

- (1) LI, G of I Despatch No 91 - S of S, 1.9.82
- (2) FO 78 4528, Porte's 68511/142 of 16.11.82 - Musurus, passed to Granville, 27.11.82 at an interview.
- (3) p.3.101n. 2

for the earlier Abdali gains around Zaida (1). The Haushabi chief made his peace with the Resident in March, 1874 (2). But no Haushabi chief could ever accept the Abdali right to possession of the land at Zaida, to Abdali gains at Shuqa in 1873/74, and later, at alAnad in 1894 (3). These grievances provided successive Haushabi chiefs with a justification, at least in their own eyes, for seeking Ottoman support, and they continued to draw an Ottoman stipend, albeit secretively, as well as their British stipend (4).. But the Abdali superiority in resources, and the ease with which the Abdalis could approach his home at arRaha, on the northern edge of the coastal plain, induced the Haushabi chief to withdraw to Museimir, beyond reach of surprise Abdali attacks. That further isolated the Haushabi chiefs from contact with the British and strengthened the Abdali capacity to blacken their Haushabi neighbour's character,

(1) p.2.29 n. 3

(2) AIA 643, Res 58/228 - S of S of 31.3.74

(3) AAR 1883/4 para 10

(4) IOL L/P & S/7, Vol 70 121 G of I - S of S, 20.6.93
and AIA/M/32 f 447, Note by Salih Jaffer, Feb 1881

with little fear of contradiction.

Most Residents recognised that the Abdali seizure of Haushabi land was inequitable (1). But they felt, possibly mistakenly, that Haushabi resentment did not endanger British interests and that, therefore, the Residency should not intervene. Yet when the Haushabi chief made his only possible effective protest, and closed the caravan routes down to Abdali territory, Aden's interests, and Aden's trade, were harmed. The Resident, on such occasions, protested to the Haushabi chief and withheld his stipend. Such action increased Haushabi mistrust of the Residency. The Haushabis complained of an apparent British bias towards the nearer Abdali chief. There were traces of such a bias; the Residency Interpreter referred to the Haushabi chief as a 'jungle Arab' (2).

Not even Schneider's prestige in 1874 was sufficient to settle the Abdali-Haushabi dispute. Schneider recognised that the Haushabi chief, Ali bin Mana, had

(1) AAR 1883/84 para 10

(2) AIA/M/32 f 647. Salih Jaffer's comment on Haushabi chief's letter - Res, received 27.12.81

never interfered with the trade routes while the Ottomans were at Shuqa in 1873; that Ali had not broken any agreement with the British (1). Ali was therefore paid his arrears of stipend. Schneider believed that Fadhl bin Mohsin ought to return the Zaida land. Schneider told Ali bin Mana so and arranged for the latter to meet Fadhl bin Mohsin to discuss a settlement. But Schneider had no authority to enforce a settlement, or to require Fadhl bin Mohsin to surrender his new gains in the Shuqa area. Schneider realised that possession of Shuqa by the Haushabi would again enable Ali bin Mana to threaten the Abdali possession of the lands around Zaida (2). Schneider may not initially have recognised the value to the Abdalis of controlling their irrigation headworks. Within two years the big increase in cultivation in the Abdali area showed that value (3). Reference to Map F shows that by dominating the area up to alAnad, north of the fortified tower of Shuqa, the Abdalis could

(1) AIA 643 p.197, Res 58/228 of 31.3.74 - S of S

(2) AIA 643 p.483, Res 144/577 of 29.7.74 - SGB and
of 30.7.74 - S of S

(3) P & S 75, News No 2 of 1876

prevent the Haushabis diverting water down the Wadi Bilih into the desert.

Fadh1 bin Mohsin met Ali bin Mana with the Fadhli chief, Haidera bin Ahmad, in June, 1874, at Lahej. Fadh1 offered back up to 200 Dhumds (1) of the best lands in the Zaida area to Ali bin Mana, but the Abdali chief refused to return the tower of Shuqa which the Haushabi chief demanded. Even though Ali had admitted to Schneider that he could not recover his territory by force, Ali refused to accept what the Abdali chief offered. It is possible that Fadh1 bin Mohsin's death encouraged Ali bin Mana to stage a token raid on Shuqa on 27.7.74. The raid was supported by 300 neighbouring Dairi and Dhumbari tribesmen, but the only achievement was the token slaughter of one Abdali camel and four bullocks. The Abdali reply was a raid on arRaha in November, when four Haushabis were killed for the loss of two Abdalis. In the Resident's view, the fighting was an intertribal quarrel which should not involve the British. Schneider was confident that Ali bin Mana would not interfere with

(1) Dhumd = as much land as can be ploughed in one day by a pair of cattle

the trade routes to Lahej, despite this quarrel (1). The Haushabi chief did, however, close the roads through his territory. The Resident reacted predictably and stopped the Haushabi stipend. But, more practically, Schneider arranged for Amir Ali Mugbil of Dhala to mediate between the two sides (2). A short truce in 1875 was followed by a year's truce from February 1876. That truce was renewed on Schneider's mediation for a further year in January 1877 (3). After Schneider left, his successor, Major General F.A.E. Loch, was unable to renew the truce before it expired in 1878 (4). A further truce was arranged, in the interests of trade, through the mediation of the Amir of Dhala later in 1878 (5). But it was not until May, 1881, that an Abdali-Haushabi

(1) FO 78 2756, Res 40 of 21.11.74 - S of S passed by

IO - FO on 5.1.75

(2) AAR 75/76, para 6

(3) AAR 76/77, para 6

(4) AAR 77/78, para 8

(5) AAR 1878/79, para 8

settlement appeared to have been reached (1).

The new settlement gave back 300 dhums to Ali bin Mana (2). That was more than he had been previously offered, but less than he wanted (3). It appears that Fadhl bin Ali was also dissatisfied and that he was reluctant to bind himself by an agreement with the Haushabi chief before Residency officials. In February, 1881, Fadhl bin Ali had written to the Resident that he was arranging a settlement of the dispute (4). Fadhl bin Ali even pleaded sickness as an excuse for not himself signing the Abdali-Haushabi, and other, agreements in Aden (5).

Ali bin Mana had paid Loch a visit in March, 1882 (6),

(1) Aitchison Treaties No XXII, p.89-90, dated 5.5.81.

Haushabi signed 14.7.81 (see AIA 855 p.148)

(2) Wrongly marked as (acres) after 'dhums'

(3) AIA/M/32 f 543, Ali bin Mana - Loch, undated but in the summer of 1881

(4) AIA 876, Fadhl bin Ali - Res, received 4.2.81

(5) p.7.11 n. 1

(6) AAR 1881/82, para 11

when he received the Resident's highest tribute for reliability and co-operation. He was presented with an obsolete, bronze, 6 pounder field piece and 300 rounds of solid shot (1). It was intended to assist him in controlling his tribesmen and preserving peace on the caravan routes. But, in the absence of a competent gunner, its value as artillery was doubtful. The Resident's relations with the Haushabi chief remained cordial, while Residency relations with Fadhl bin Ali deteriorated steadily from 1882 (2). That process of deterioration continued under successive Residents until Fadhl's death in 1898. The deterioration in Anglo-Abdali relations may have encouraged the Haushabi chief to annoy Fadhl bin Ali from 1883 (3). Each chief blamed the other for the renewal of hostilities. In Ali bin Mana's view the Abdali chief encouraged his tribal opponents (4). Progress in the earlier talks to settle

(1) AIA 855 p.147, Loch - Hunter in a note of 13.7.81 and SGB's No 47 of 5.1.82 - Res

(2) AAR 1882/83 para 15 and AAR 1883/84 para 10

(3) AAR 1883/84 paras 10 and 11

(4) AIA/M/32 f 568, Ali bin Mana - Res, undated, rec'd 27.9.81

the dispute had depended on Muhammad bin Mohsin, not on the Abdali chief (1). Muhammad's death in 1881 was soon followed by Haushabi-Abdali arguments and by renewed fighting (2). That was probably inevitable; Ali bin Mana did not trust Fadhl bin Ali; and the Abdali-Haushabi settlement of 1881 left scope for misunderstandings. The Haushabi chief had wanted all the land watered by the Ober Khilafirrigation channel, and not just a part of it. Had he been given all the land, there could have been no subsequent dispute over the division of water between the bunded fields on the Ober Khilaf. There is however no evidence how much land was involved. In theory, any argument about the Haushabis wasting water, and so depriving the Abdalis of it, was

(1) p.7.11 n.7

(2) AIA/M/32 f 629, Report of Residency 'Sergeant' - Showeesh Salih - Salih Jaffer of 19.12.81.

AIA/M/32, Ali bin Mana - Loch, rec'd 27.9.81

'... whoever enters into friendship with them [the Abdalis] they knock him down ...'.

to be settled by the Resident's arbitration (1). Loch deputed that duty to two local subordinates, who lacked the prestige of more senior staff (2). It is, however, unlikely that Fadhl bin Ali would have kept any agreement that was not closely enforced. Fadhl was resentful of the cession of land at Shaikh Othman forced upon him in 1881/82 and consequently ill-disposed to accept British advice (3). The British were preoccupied with developments in Egypt and on the Hadhramaut Coast (4). Later, the Somali Coast monopolised attention (5). The Resident therefore lacked sufficient staff to supervise, and the military strength required to enforce, any Abdali-Haushabi settlement. Disagreement continued, without further serious fighting, until Ali bin Mana died on 4.5.1886 (6). Throughout this period,

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXII Clause III of the Agreement

(2) Showeesh Saleh, Residency head messenger, and Jemadar Musabein of the Aden Troop

(3) See p. 7.21

(4) See p. 4.78 - 4.92

(5) p.6.34 - 6.79

(6) AIA 1074, AAR 1886/7 p.7

Fadh1 bin Ali was too pre-occupied with his attempts to acquire effective control over the Subaihi tribes, who had been placed under him in 1881, to attack Ali bin Mana. For his part, the Haushabi ruler was ready to '... throw himself into the arms of the Porte if he could thereby crush his arch enemy the Abdali ...' (1).

Soon after the accession of 26 year old (2) Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana, the Abdali chief found himself forced to withdraw from the Subaihi area because of the hostility of the tribesmen (2). Fadh1 then bought back from the Haushabi the land returned in 1881 (2). That removed one cause for Abdali-Haushabi friction. Unfortunately, the young Haushabi chief failed to control his tribesmen and security within Haushabi limits on the trade routes decreased (2). This led in time to more Abdali-Haushabi disagreement, at a time when Fadh1 bin Ali was able to give more attention to, and to exert more strength against,

(1) AIA 972, Res - SGB, 2.3.85

(2) AAR 1886/87

the Haushabis. In September, 1889, Fadh1 bin Ali was informed that the Government of India no longer recognised his authority over the Subaihi tribes (1). For a time, Abdali and Haushabi differences with their Subaihi neighbours were stronger than any Abdali irritation with the Haushabis, and an uneasy peace prevailed (2). The Residency intervened in 1889/90 when Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana blocked the route to Lahej at alAnad (3). Both chiefs were ordered to meet to settle their differences peaceably. A reconciliation was arranged through the Amir of Dhala, but it did not provide a lasting settlement (4).

Haushabi goodwill to the British was recorded in 1889 (5); and Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana gave full co-operation to Captain Wahab's mapping survey in 1891/92(6).

(1) AAR 1889/90 para 14

(2) AAR 90/91 para 13, AIA 1095

(3) AAR 1889/90

(4) AAR 1890/91 para 18

(5) AIA 1052, AAR 89/90 (Draft, no paras)

(6) IOL E 60 Confidential Report by Capt. Wahab of 1892, p.4

By contrast, the Abdali, Agrabi and Fadhli chiefs initially refused their co-operation or left correspondence unanswered. About this time, the Resident lent the Haushabi chief 25 rifles and gave him '... a large quantity of ammunition to punish the Jobbaira [Suhaihis] ...', who ~~who had been raiding caravans within Haushabi~~ limits (1). Since the Jobbaira had plundered a trade caravan coming from Ottoman territory and had looted goods and beasts worth over £300, the matter was an Anglo-Ottoman, not an intertribal, affair (2).

The attitude of Residency officials at this period was still that inter-tribal fighting was no concern of the Residency, unless it endangered some foreign, i.e. non-Yemeni, interest (3). Thus, when Captain Wahab ~~was~~ surveying in the Haushabi area in 1892, the Haushabi chief was required '... to keep the peace [with his Subaihi neighbours] until the survey is over - then the Kilkenny cats can eat each other at leisure ...' (4). Tribal

(1) AAR 89/90 para 22

(2) AAR 89/90 para 31

(3) Ingrams 'Arabia' p.108

(4) AIA 1115 f 383, Stace to Wahab, 21.1.92

behaviour in the Yemen was viewed with considerable distaste by British officials. Tribal attitudes were different to those of the British. The latter found it repugnant to execute a prisoner caught raiding but acceptable if he was shot '... in fair fight ...'. On the whole, the remoter Yemeni tribesmen, including the Haushabis, found the British difficult to understand, because there was so little contact between the two races.

The British wanted only to 'preserve their strategic interests' so far as possible. When the Resident reported that there were Ottoman-Haushabi proposals to construct an effective Haushabi customs post at alAnad, to prevent smuggling into Ottoman territory, the Haushabi chief was invited to sign a Protectorate treaty (1). The Haushabi chief was prepared to accept a treaty guaranteeing British protection, but not one that forbade him to cede territory to a foreign Power without British consent. The British were not prepared to accept the presence of a civilian

(1) LI, Despatch 121 of 20.6.93, rec'd 10.7.93, enclosing
Res - SGB, 13.3.93

Ottoman customs clerk at alAnad. The situation reached deadlock. Possibly the Abdali chief decided to act while Anglo-Haushabi relations were strained.

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Abdali-Haushabi hostilities in 1894 may have been provoked by the British insistence that the caravan routes had to be protected. The Haushabi chief could only guarantee caravans' safety if they were escorted by some Haushabi tribesmen, who had to be paid (1). The Abdali chief, Fadhl bin Mohsin, had faced the same problem in 1865, and he had solved it with British approval, by instituting transit dues on caravans. Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana levied 4 annas per camel on caravans, payable to the escort (2). This tax was represented as a '... heavy and unauthorised tax on Kafilahs ...' by Fadhl bin Ali. It appears that the

- (1) AIA/M/53, Cmdr. Aden Troop - First Assistant Res,
(Davies), writing from Museimir, 8.9.01
- (2) AAR 94/95 para 6

Resident, Jopp, may not have appreciated the reasons for the introduction of the Haushabi tax on caravans. The Residency, at that period, had little contact with the interior. Jopp believed that the correct policy for the Residency was to be neutral in the quarrel (1).

Fadh1 bin Ali had recruited a large force of tribesmen from other, and more warlike, tribes than his own and he swept aside Haushabi opposition (1). He had asked for, but did not get, arms and ammunition from the Residency. But he had received 250 rifles when he took over responsibility for the Subaihi area, in 1881. He also had access to arms from Djibuti, which were smuggled into the Yemen through Ras alAra. The Haushabi chief lacked the resources of Fadh1 bin Ali, with the latter's revenue from agriculture, and from taxes in the relatively wealthy and expanding Abdali area. Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana fled. He asked for, but failed to get, Ottoman assistance. After the Haushabi tribesmen had been persuaded to 'elect' Fadh1 bin Ali as their new ruler, Mohsin bin Ali bin Mana

(1) AIA 1203 f 317, Muhammad S. Jaffer's Draft AAR 1894/95, later re-edited

came to Lahej and surrendered (1). Mohsin agreed to live wherever his enemy required and promised Fadhl obedience (2). But the Resident intervened and prevented a permanent Abdali occupation of the Haushabi area. The Abdali chief had provisionally appointed two deputies to administer the Haushabis, with a garrison to enforce obedience.

A new Abdali-Haushabi relationship emerged with the Anglo-Haushabi Protectorate Agreement of 6.8.1895 which recognised Abdali suzerainty over the Haushabi chief (3). That agreement was signed by Fadhl bin Ali, as the Haushabi suzerain, and not by the Haushabi chief. Henceforward, the Haushabi stipend was paid through the Abdali chief and Abdali officials collected both Abdali and Haushabi caravan dues at alAnad on the Abdali-Haushabi border.

The Abdalis withdrew their mercenaries and officials from Haushabi territory and the Haushabi chief resumed

- (1) AAR 1894/95 para 7
- (2) AAR draft, AIA 1203, f 319
- (3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXV

his rule, but as an Abdali client. This new relationship was convenient for the British as another anti-Ottoman barrier, but it embittered Haushabi relations with the Abdalis and with the British. Fadhl bin Ali and his successor from 1898, Ahmad bin Fadhl, had also acquired some shadowy excuse for intervening in Haushabi affairs. They did so to keep the Haushabi chief weak, and to reduce his influence over his own tribesmen (1). Understandably, '... the Haushabi man hate[d] Lahedj like poison and his keeping of alAnad and collecting his tolls ...' (2).

The Abdali chief was believed to have been intriguing with dissident Haushabi sections to keep the Haushabi chief weak. The hopelessness of his position, and his inability to recover the land that he and his father had lost, appeared to affect Mohsin bin Ali's health adversely after 1895. When Wahab met him again during the Border Surveys, in 1903-04, Wahab deplored Mohsin's mental and physical deterioration. Mohsin had become soured and

(1) p.9.1 n.4

(2) AIA M/53, Cmdr Aden Trp - First Asst Res (Davies)

8.9.1901

embittered. He was no longer obeyed by his tribesmen; he had been unjustly treated by the Abdali chief and he was misunderstood by the Residency. As a result, Anglo-Haushabi relations were strained. The Haushabi chief and his successor could only hope to recover lost territory with Ottoman aid. Mohsin bin Ali died in 1904. He was succeeded by his cousin, who joined the Ottomans on their advance on Lahej in 1915.

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The British attitude towards Subaihi-Abdali relations

Abdali involvement in Subaihi affairs had increased after Tremenheere employed the Abdali chief as a British intermediary in 1871 (1). The Abdali chief remained a customary channel for British communication with, and for information on, the Subaihis. Lahej was a market centre for the Subaihis. Some Subaihis, however, did visit the Residency staff without any introductions from

(1) See p.2.52 n.2

the Abdali chief. The Abdali chief and his uncle, Muhammad, acquired lands in the Subaihi area which they then had to protect from looting.(1) Fadhl bin Ali claimed that he spent RS20,000 in 1877 on operations against Subaihi trouble-makers and RS7,000 in 1879 (2).

The Subaihis were poor and they maintained a reputation as troublesome neighbours throughout the period (3). Between 1.4.1880 and 23.7.1880, 13 Subaihi robberies were recorded (4). But it was Hunter's opinion, in October, 1880, that a British occupation of Shaikh Othman need not face a security problem from Subaihi raids. '... Negotiations [sic] now in progress towards the permanent settlement of the responsibility for the depredations of these troublesome Bedawins will remove all possible apprehension ...', Hunter wrote (5). The intention was to transfer to the Abdali chief a potentially

(1) AIA 855, para 12, Res 117-598 of 16.5.81 - SGB.

These lands were valued at MT\$10,000

(2) Probably including the price of arms, see p. 7.44n.1

(3) AIA 855, para 4, Res 117-598 of 16.5.81 - SGB

(4) AIA 855 f 59. Details from unsigned memo of 1880

(5) AIA 876, Hunter's Minute of 24.10.80 - Res

troublesome and expensive liability, which, it was hoped, the Abdalis could settle by using whatever methods they chose. Ultimately British prestige proved to be a greater safeguard to Shaikh Othman than Abdali arms or intrigue.

The Abdali chief was encouraged to accept full responsibility for the Subaihi area by permission to purchase used, service, rifles from the Bombay arsenal (1). He also bought 4,000 rounds of ammunition. That was an economical price to pay for an intended solution of a problem that the British had left dormant since 1871 (2). Loch had optimistically asserted in July 1881 that '... the [Abdali] Sultan will require no assistance from the Residency in bringing the Subaihi into subjection beyond the sanction to purchase rifles ...' (3). But Loch also admitted that the Abdali chief might require to buy ammunition, and might even require support from the Aden Troop.

(1) AIA 855, Military Dept.'s 6706 of 29.12.81 - Res

(2) 2.45 - 2.54

(3) AIA 855, Res 179-898 of 9.7.81 - SGB

Fadh1 bin Ali had been allowed to buy 20 Snider carbines and 1000 rounds of ammunition in 1876, but other, unauthorised, arms imports into Aden were banned (1). In May, 1881, Fadh1 bin Ali had 12 rifles, imported from Britain, detained in the Aden arsenal (2). Another 51, bought from their Somali salvagers off a British wreck and imported for Fadh1 bin Ali, had been destroyed (2). The Subaihi agreement thus introduced a new element into Residency policy in the area, that of assisting a supposedly dependable Yemeni protégé to extend his control to increase local security and keep out foreign influence, at the price of local arms imports. That innovation, and the Subaihi agreement of which it formed a part, was made by Loch on his own initiative. Loch was warned that his action was premature, and that it was not to be treated as a precedent (3).

(1) IOL, BSC, P & S 76, B^o Resolution No 6578 of 16.11.76, f 1339

(2) AIA 76, Loch's Memo of 7.5.81

(3) AIA 855, For Dept, G of I's Pol No 2207 E.P. of 20.9.81 - G of B^o, Extract forwarded by B^o Resolution 4923 of 11.10.81 - Res

Loch believed that Fadhl would refuse to ratify the Subaihi agreement (1). Loch therefore informed Fadhl bin Ali that the Anglo-Abdali Subaihi agreement (2) had been ratified by the Indian Government and that '... we are prepared to carry its stipulations into effect by recognising you as the paramount power as regards the Subaihis ...' (3). Loch did not even carry out his instructions that '... the Sultan should be distinctly given to understand that it [the agreement] is liable to reconsideration in the event of his showing himself unable to maintain his authority over the Subaihis or failing to act up to the terms which he has accepted ...' (4). Consequently, the later British withdrawal of recognition was the source of another of Fadhl's grievances.

The Anglo-Abdali agreement about the Subaihi tribes, in both the English and Arabic versions, referred

(1) See p.7.16 n.1

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXIII

(3) AIA 855, Res - Fadhl bin Ali, 21.10.81

(4) AIA 855, para 2, B^O Resolution 4923 of 11.10.81
forwarded to Res

to all the Subaihi sections, excluding only those which acknowledged the Ottomans (1). But the Resident's subsequent letter to Bombay of 16.5.1881 showed that he only expected the Abdalis to secure control over the nearer sections (2). Loch mentioned the Makhdoomi, Mansuri, Rijai and Dhubaini sections. He specifically excluded the 'still independent' Maqtari and Athwari sections on the Ottoman frontier (2). Yet these sections had been forced to acknowledge Ottoman suzerainty in 1873 according to Aden Residency reports (3).

Misunderstandings soon occurred; Fadhl's Abdali followers appeared in inconvenient places. The Governor-General of the Yemen complained to the new Resident, General J. Blair, of an Abdali occupation of the Athwari village of alMowlaa (4). Blair ordered Fadhl to withdraw his men. Other Abdalis had appeared

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXIII

(2) AIA 855, Res 117-598 of 16.5.81 - SGB

(3) AIA 625, Aden News No 26 of 18-25.6.73 referred to the Maqtari

(4) BSC 81/84, Vol V f 915, Izzat Pasha's letter of 25.12.83 - Res

at Shaikh Said in the Hakimi section's territory. Since the British had recognised Ottoman control there in 1869 (1), an Abdali claim to the right to search the coast for ambergris was unjustified. The Resident told Fadhl so (2).

Fadhl was pre-occupied with any method of raising extra revenue from his new and ill-defined territory. But the Subaihis were poor and wanted as much as possible from their rather inhospitable country. Abdali-Subaihi relations became strained. Security deteriorated and the Residency's weekly overland mail to the garrison and coal depot at Perim was endangered (3). In August, 1886, an Abdali post in Subaihi territory was overrun and its garrison was massacred. Fadhl appealed to the Resident (4). With the assistance of the Aden Troop the remaining Abdali garrisons were evacuated (5). Fadhl received the

(1) p.3.2 n.3 ; but British Boundary Commissioners claimed it in 1904, p.9.115n. 2 and on to 9.119

(2) BSC 81/84 f 1047, Res No 1725 of 19.3.83 - Fadhl bin Ali, passed to IO by B^o

(3) AIA 952 deals with this service, which was operating in 1884

(4) AAR 1886/87

(5) Bury 'Uz' p.80 mentions this event in a nursery rhyme

loan of Residency rifles and ammunition to equip a relief force to accompany the Aden Troop (1). Thereafter, the Subaihi sections began to resume their earlier independent relations with the Residency. But Fadhl was not officially informed that the Anglo-Abdali agreement was repudiated by the British for about three years (2). He was then told '... not to interfere with the Subaihis beyond what might be necessary for the protection of Lahej territory ...' (2). Fadhl replied by asserting his own claims (3). One was to the Subaihi anchorage of Khor Umeira, some 60 miles west of Aden, which was used for the smuggling of arms and slaves into the Yemen. Both were profitable imports, but objectionable to the British. Fadhl bin Ali was known to participate in slave-dealing (4). Fadhl's irritation at the

(1) p.7.47 n.4

(2) AAR 1889/90

(3) AIA 1086, draft 89/90 report para 14. Fadhl had taken possession of the good anchorage of Khor AlUmeira

(4) p.7.52 n. 2 There is no evidence of the scale of his participation

cancellation of the Subaihi agreement was recognised (1).

The growth in merchant shipping through the Gulf of Aden, off the Subaihi south coast, obliged the Residency to take measures to protect seafarers, ships and cargo wrecked along that shore. Since Fadhl could provide no protection, agreements were made directly with the coastal Subaihi sections (2). Where punitive action was necessary the Residency arranged that without calling for Abdali assistance. Thus in retaliation for some Barhimis plundering the Perim mail, the Native Assistant Resident, Muhammad Salih Jaffer, was sent against them with locally raised tribal levies, armed and financed by the Residency (3). But British supervision over the area was largely nominal. It was sufficient to prevent the establishment of foreign settlements on the coast, but not to prevent Subaihi agreements with other foreigners. British and Subaihi

(1) AIA 1114 f 69, Undated Memo by Brig. J. Jopp of ? Oct 1890

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' XXX, Atifi agreement 1889

XXXI, Barhimi agreement 1889

(3) AAR 1889/90

understanding of the obligations of the new Protectorate Treaties differed! The Atifis saw no reason to refuse a monthly stipend of £MT75 p.m. from the Ottoman 'Société de Tombac' in return for banning tobacco imports through Khor Umeira (1). The Resident, however, deplored that '... these wild and uneducated Arabs are not proof against pecuniary inducements and ... [that they] ignore the moral obligations of treaties ...' (1).

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The Indian Government's attitude towards its own treaties was not always above criticism. Jopp had informed Fadhl bin Ali in 1890 that '... the Arabic version of the [Anglo-Abdali] treaty [of 1849] (2) is useless and that our Great Government have ordered that the English version must be the one to be gone by ...' (3). Jopp was only repeating the official view of Sir William Lee-Warner, the Secretary to the Government

(1) BSC 89/96, Res 54 of 15.11.94 - S of S

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XX

(3) AIA 1114, Res - Fadhl bin Ali, 8.10.90

of Bombay (1). Lee-Warner had no doubt that the English copy of all tribal agreements with the British was the master copy. He was confident that the inconvenience that Aden suffered from a recent Abdali tax on vegetables could be removed by sending Fadhl '... a true Arabic translation of the English version ...' of the treaty (1). That denied the Abdalis the right to tax vegetables going to Aden, whereas the Arabic version of the treaty made no reference to vegetables. Fadhl, however, refused to accept this one-sided British ruling (2). He claimed that each version of the treaty was equally valid. Jopp had to accept that he possessed no veto on the tax. He could only urge that the tax should be a light one (3).

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Jopp endeavoured to secure British control over

(1) AIA 1114, SGB's No 4265 of 9.7.90 - Res

(2) AIA 1114, Fadhl bin Ali - Res, 13.10.90 and 20.10.90

(3) AIA 1114, Res - Fadhl bin Ali, 7.1.91

Fadh1 bin Ali through the signing of an Anglo-Abdali Protectorate Treaty (1). Such a treaty would have given greater British powers of interference in Abdali affairs, including slave trading. Fadh1 denied that such a trade existed, but it was admitted by other Yemenis, including Fadh1's own brother (2). Fadh1 had no intention of accepting any ban on the trade. He argued that, since there was '... no bazaar for slaves ...' in Lahej, the British had no cause for concern (3). Fadh1's successful opposition to a Protectorate treaty was embarrassing and irritating to the Resident. A rejected draft for the 1890/91 Aden Annual Report recorded some details of Fadh1's persistence in evading discussions with the Resident on the draft treaty which had been taken to Lahej by the Residency Interpreter for Fadh1 to consider (4).

(1) p.7.49 n.1

(2) AIA 1114, Memo Stace - Res 1.8.90, quoting Fadh1's brother who had himself 2 slaves, imported by Fadh1

(3) AIA 1114, Fadh1 bin Ali - Res, 15.5.92

(4) AIA 1105, Draft by Muhammad Salih rejected by
Lt. Col. E.V. Stace

Fadhli's intransigence achieved his purpose. The Abdali chief remained, until 1952, without a Protectorate treaty. All the other coastal tribal sections were obliged to accept Protectorate treaties as a part of the policy of strengthening the British position along the whole length of south Arabia (1). Mention of the Abdali refusal to accept a new treaty was omitted from the Annual Report for 1890/91 to avoid adverse publicity.

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Brigadier J.W. Schneider had possessed great influence over the Abdali chiefs from 1873 and he had secured Fadhli bin Mohsin's agreement to commuting Abdali transit dues whenever the Indian Government wished. The dues had only been introduced in 1865; and a case therefore existed for their abolition since the money raised was no longer needed for the protection of caravans trading with Aden from Fadhli raiders. Failure to arrange the early abolition of the dues was a mistake, possibly due to Residency staff changes. In 1880, the Government

(1) FO 78 3974. FO Memo of 2.10.86

of India agreed to consider commuting the dues for RS5000 p.m. (1). But no arrangements were made and Article IV of the Shaikh Othman agreement of 1882 recognised the continuing Abdali right to collect the tax in Crater '... so long as the Sultan of Lahej possesses the right to levy ...' it (2). It is probable that Loch considered that the abolition of the transit tax had a low priority beside the other matters under negotiation with Fadhl bin Ali, and that the time was inopportune for raising the subject. As Fadhl remained unco-operative with later Residents, his agreement to a revision was unlikely. Each year the tax became more profitable and more expensive to commute, as Aden's trade and population grew, so the tax remained.

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Anglo-Abdali relations improved when Ahmad bin Fadhl succeeded his cousin, Fadhl bin Ali, in 1898.

(1) Cf. p.7.7 n.2 Delay in buying Shaikh Othman

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXIV

British confidence in the new ruler was demonstrated by British approval of an Abdali re-occupation of some Subaihi areas. The British move was designed to increase security and to reduce Subaihi robberies (1). It also secured Abdali surveillance of the coastal anchorage of Ras alAra, frequented by fishing boats and smugglers' craft (2). The closer Anglo-Abdali relations were due to the personality of Ahmad bin Fadhl (3), and to the efforts which General G. O'Moore Creagh made to improve friendly relations with the Yemenis (4). Ahmad bin Fadhl was a frequent visitor to the gymkhanas which O'Moore Creagh encouraged on the Maalla plain (3). Ahmad was for many years friendly with G.Wyman Bury (5) and he remained, until his death in 1914, a close friend of H.F. Jacob (6). Official British approval was marked

(1) Aitchison 'Treaties' p.6

(2) Jacob 'Kings' p.91, refers to the arms trade there.

(3) Jacob 'Kings' p.269.

(4) AIA C 28 Private letter Maj-Gen. P.J.Maitland - Sir William Lee Warner 26.12.1901.

(5) AIA 28/4, Bury - Lt.Col. H.M.Abud, 9.4.05.

(6) Jacob 'Kings' p. 88 & p. 153.

by Ahmad's appointment to be a K.C.S.I. in 1901. But, throughout his chiefship, Sir Ahmad bin Fadhl was quick to emphasise his independence of British control whenever the reverse was suggested (1).

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The Abdalis and the Aqrabis

Fadhl bin Mohsin and Fadhl bin Ali each wanted to obtain control over the Aqrabi Shaikhdom (2). Ahmad bin Fadhl probably shared their ambition. Hunter accepted in 1885 that that would probably happen on the death of the Aqrabi Shaikh, Abdullah ba Haidera, because of the lack of a strong successor and because of internal Aqrabi divisions (3). But Abdullah's long life (4) and developments in British policy in the Yemen during this period prevented the Abdalis taking over the whole area.

(1) Jacob 'Kings' p.87

(2) 'p.2.34 - 2.44

(3) FO 78 4528, IO forwarded Hunter's Memo of 28.9.85 written in London - FO on 15.10.85

(4) Shaikh^k, 1858 to March 1905, when he died

Fadh1 bin Ali did, however, acquire the Saila area, after that section of the tribe had rejected Abdullah's authority.

Fadh1 bin Ali also encouraged Subaihi raids on Aqrabi territory, even though Salih Jaffer successfully mediated between the Abdali and Aqrabi chiefs and settled outstanding differences in June 1876 (1). The two chiefs then agreed not to harbour each other's malcontents where the latter were accused of criminal activities (2). But hostility continued between the Aqrabis of Sailah and those of the principal settlement at Bir Ahmad. The Resident banned the Saila Aqrabis from entering Aden and obtained a 2 years truce between the two factions (3). Aqrabi trouble from the Subaihis continued throughout 1880/81 (4). In 1882, Fadh1 bin Ali profited by his new control over the Subaihi area to divert caravan traffic through Waht and away from Bir Ahmad, thus depriving the

(1) BSC 1876 f 237, Copy of a letter from Aqrabi Shaikh to A^g Res (Goodfellow) rec'd 12.6.76

(2) AAR 76/77, para 10

(3) AAR 77/78, para 10

(4) AAR 1880/81, para 20

Aqrabi Shaikh of revenue (1). Fadhl bin Ali paid no attention to British remonstrances, and, in 1890, '... the matter was dropped as it appeared useless to do anything further ...' (2). Subaihi raids against the Aqrabis continued, incited by Fadhl bin Ali (3). Since British policy was to avoid interfering in internal Yemeni affairs the Aqrabis were left to arrange their own protection, but they continued to co-operate with the Residency when asked to do so.

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Residency relations with the nearer Yemeni tribes east of Aden, 1873-1901

Tribal affairs east of Aden were of little interest to the Residency after 1867, so long as foreign

(1) AAR 1882/83 para 17

(2) AIA 1105, Draft AAR 1890/91 by Muhammad Salih Jaffer.

The final AAR was more discrete

(3) e.g. AAR 1883/84 para 11

interference was prevented. The Abyan delta provided Aden with some local supplies, mainly charcoal and fodder; but the Abdali area provided the greater part. British policy as it developed during the 19th, and early in the 20th century, was to intervene locally only to counter interest by foreign Powers, and to discourage British and foreign travellers in areas of Arabia under British influence (1). Official British contact was largely restricted to visits to the coastal ports. The chiefs in these ports were provided with Union Jacks, for use on the approach of strange craft, to proclaim Anglo-Arab accord. The Arabs wished to preserve the life they knew (2); and it suited British policy that they should. Foreign influences were kept out and British influence in the area continued unchallenged and at little cost.

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(1) e.g. p.1.5 n.4

(2) Jacob 'Kings' p.73

The Fadhli tribe was brought into contact with the Residency by Merewether's operations in 1865-67 (1); their future chief, Haidera bin AbdAllah, developed a friendship with the future Residency Interpreter, Salih Jaffer; and the latter was the tribal Agent in Aden from 1867-1876. When Haidera was murdered in 1877, his 16 year old nephew, Ahmad bin Husain, was elected chief. Ahmad needed, and received, guidance and help from the Residency in the early years of his chiefship. In 1879, the British captured and deported the young chief's father, who was opposing his son (2). In 1881, Ahmad agreed to sell his dubious rights to the possession of Imad village to the British (3). The Abdali-Fadhli border agreement, and the British purchase of the coastal strip up to Imad in 1881, brought British territory up to the Fadhli limits. The British were interested in peaceful Abdali-Fadhli relations; the

(1) p.2.3 - 2.20

(2) AIA 1878/79, para 9

(3) p.7.10 n.1

Residents were prepared to use the Aden Troop to strengthen security in the coastal plain near Aden; but British interest did not extend farther east. They could not exert effective military pressure beyond the coastal plain, or even on it, beyond support from the Aden garrison or naval support; and the Residents were not authorised to intervene in internal Yemeni affairs.

Ahmad bin Hussain asked for British intervention to settle the Fadhli-Yafai dispute over water rights in Abyan, and to prolong their tribal truce (1). The Resident refused to intervene and advised the Fadhli chief to arrange a settlement through local intermediaries. This reply probably disappointed Ahmad, who possibly counted on British support to enforce Tremenhoe's earlier unrealistic settlement, which gave the Fadhli all the water they wanted for a trifling payment to the Yafais of \$MT25 p.a. (2). Desultory tribal fighting developed and Abyan suffered from insecurity. The Fadhli

(1) AIA/M/32 f 309-313, Correspondence and minutes on a Fadhli request of 22.5.81

(2) p.2.73 n.2

area of Abyan had never recovered the prosperity it had enjoyed before Merewether's punitive operations there in 1866. Wahab referred to the old Fadhli centre of Assala having only 30 families in 1892, where before it had had 600 (1). Other Fadhli villages were completely deserted.

The Fadhli chief had derived much of his revenue from the non-tribal cultivators, craftsmen, and traders, of Abyan before 1866. Anglo-Abdali operations destroyed Abyan's prosperity and revived Yafai raids increased insecurity. Ahmad bin Husain's pique at the British attitude is understandable. He did not understand the British and he was no match for the Abdali chief in cunning (2). It is possible that Fadhl bin Ali alAbdali had some share in the resurgence of tribal fighting in Abyan (3). In 1878, Fadhl secured Fadhli recognition of the Abdali claim to Imad as the price of his neutrality in internal Fadhli feuds. Possession of Imad gave Fadhl opportunities for intervention in Abyan. Abyan's decay

(1) IOL E60, Wahab's report

(2) AAR 1880/81, para 19

(3) Cf. Belhaven 'Road' p.152-153

as an agricultural centre enhanced Lahej's value and importance, for it left Lahej without a local rival. By 1889, the Residency was resigned to insecurity in Abyan and believed that interference was ^{un}necessary. British interest concentrated on the Abdali area.

On the Fadhli eastern border Fadhli-Aulaqi funds provided as insoluble a problem as Fadhli-Yafai disputes in the west. Ahmad bin Hus~~a~~in had poor control over some of his tribesmen; the Merqashi tribe, the main support of the Fadhli chiefs, were particularly troublesome. They had been largely responsible for the original Fadhli seizure of the Abyan area from the Yafais; and they had benefited accordingly from Abyan's crops. When the Fadhli chief lost most of his Abyan revenue, the Merqashis suffered too. Inevitably, some turned to raiding to support themselves. They gave trouble to Haidera bin Abdullah (1), and they were at times beyond the effective control of Ahmad bin Hus~~a~~in (2). In 1874,

(1) p.2.31 n.2

(2) AIA 1203, AAR 94/95, paras 5 & 6

the Merqashis raided the Lower Aulaqis (1) and the Aulaqis retaliated with a massive raid (2). In 1876, the Merqashi were fighting the Upper Aulaqis in Dathina (3). In 1878/79, and in 1882/83, Ahmad bin Husain received 'munitions of war' and 'substantial assistance' to help him against his Aulaqi neighbours, and against his own Merqashi tribesmen.

In 1890, the Resident misguidedly called the Fadhli and Lower Aulaqi chiefs to Aden for a settlement of their disputes. Only when they arrived did the Resident realise that '... the claims were very complicated and had arisen from inter-tribal quarrels and [that] there was no possibility of settling the disputes ... without intervening in tribal disputes, with which we have no concern ...' (4). Both tribes returned home dissatisfied at an abortive meeting, and at the Residency's poor

- (1) Probably the Ba Kazim from the name of a dead Aulaqi 'bin Amboor'
- (2) AIA 648, News No 41, 12-20.11.74, Allegedly 1000 men raided and 36 were killed
- (3) Aden News No 20 of 17-24.5.76
- (4) AIA 1052, AAR 89/90, para 8

hospitality. The Lower Aulaqi delegation was larger than invited and the surplus members were not entertained; nor were any of the Fadhlis. The Fadhli chief refused a parting present because of the inhospitable treatment his party had received. The Aulaqis vented their spleen on leaving by houghing two camels near Shaikh Othman (1). The disillusionment of the Fadhlis and Aulaqis with the Residency was, however, less important than it might have been earlier: both chiefs had agreed to Protectorate Treaties in 1888 (2). These agreements provided international legal status for Britain's previously undeclared Protectorate along the South Arabian coast.

The Fadhli chief's disillusionment with the Residency's ineffectiveness estranged him from the British. His father, released from exile in India, however accepted responsibility on his son's behalf, for controlling the Merqashis, within British limits, in 1886 (3). But Ahmad bin Husain became less co-operative;

(1) AAR 89/90, Para 10

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' XXVI & XXXVII (1933 edition)

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' p.11

Section 8.

The Dhala Area 1874 - 1900

Dhala was a non-tribal village, with a weekly market, inhabited by Muslims and Jews; it had a population of about 1,000 in 1892 (1). The village was dominated by the Amir's fort; it faced across the fertile Dhala plateau to the Yafai hills on the east; to the west was Jebel Jihaf. Much of the Dhala plateau belonged to the Shairi tribe, which accepted Ottoman suzerainty by 1873. The Amirs of Dhala possessed an Ottoman firman from 'Sultan Suleiman' (probably Suleiman II, 1520-1566). The date was not given; the document was loosely described as being of '... nearly 300 years ago ...' in 1902 (2). It is probable that the Amir's ancestors were minor Rasulid officials, confirmed in their authority after the Ottoman conquest of 1539.

The Amirs of Dhala were of partly slave descent; they had no tribal backing in the area, but they were the head of an extended family group possessing three

(1) IOL, L/P & S/20, E.60, p.5. Captain R.A. Wahab's
Survey Report

(2) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 14.2.02

enclaves separated by Shairi territory (1). They were known locally as 'the house of Kharafa, from the name of one of their principal villages (2). These Amiri enclaves were inhabited by members of the family, their 'followers' and slaves, and by non-tribal, Muslim and Jewish, cultivators and artisans. The British always had vague ideas of the extent of the Amir's authority; and the first member of the Amirial family to visit Aden officially did so only in 1867, although the Amir had been receiving an annual British stipend of MT\$ 50 since 1839. In 1872, Amir Shafil died. His successor, Ali bin Muqbil, acknowledged Ottoman suzerainty. But, having second thoughts, Amir Ali came to Aden in 1873 to appeal for support against the Ottomans (3). On his return, the Ottomans imprisoned him (4). In his place they appointed his uncle, Muhammad Mussad, as Amir, and as an Ottoman official over the Shairis.

(1) Map C

(2) Jacob 'Kings' p.170-171

(3) FO 78 2753, Res - SGB, 12.5.73, passed to FO by IO
17.6.73

(4) FO 78 2753, Res - SGB, 6.6.73, passed to FO by IO, 11.7.73

Later internal British comments, as late as 1902, accepted that the Amir of Dhala was free to accept Ottoman suzerainty and that Britain could not dispute any subsequent Ottoman claim to his territory (1). No such admission was ever made publicly. There was also a tendency for Residency staff to support successive Amirs more strongly when the officials were unfamiliar with conditions at Dhala, than when they had closer personal experience, or, when they could be more objective about local affairs after leaving Aden. Following British success in 1873 in forcing an Ottoman withdrawal from Lahej (2), British officials at Aden were aggressively possessive about Aden's hinterland. The British claim to Dhala, and British demands for an Ottoman withdrawal from the area, were unjustified; and they were confused because no British officers knew the area. The "Amiri tribe", which the British claimed to protect, did not exist, even as a tribal confederation. With such British misconceptions, Anglo-Ottoman misunderstandings in the area were inevitable.

(1) p.9.53 n.1 (and p.8.46 n.1)

(2) See Chapter 3

In March, Sidney Locock, the Chargé d'Affaires, reported that talks with both the Grand Vizier and the Foreign Minister ^{were} still '... indicating a disposition on the part of the Porte to extend its authority ...' up to the immediate vicinity of Aden (1). The Porte was asked to instruct their officials in the Yemen '... to desist from interference with the affairs of the Amir tribe [sic] , who are among those whom the Turkish Government have pledged themselves to refrain from interfering with ...' (2). Lord Derby, as Foreign Minister, warned Ambassador Musurus Pasha that Ottoman delays in withdrawing from Dhala might cause an Anglo-Ottoman clash (3). Ten days later, Derby warned that Britain would not allow Ottoman interference with any stipendiary chief, including the Amir of Dhala (4). By then, the India Office had received a letter from the Resident, enclosing a

(1) FO 78 2754 HBM Chargé - FO, 17.3.74

(2) FO 78 2755, FO - HBM Chargé, C'ple, 16.3.74, referring to Ottoman promise at 3.96 n.5

(3) FO 78 2755, Derby - Musurus Pasha, 20.4.74

(4) FO 78 2755, FO - HBM Chargé, C'ple, 30.4.74

translated letter of complaint from the Pasha at Sanaa about Amir Ali's maltreatment of Ottoman subjects and complaints by the Amir about the Ottomans (1). General J.W. Schneider telegraphed to London on 3rd May urging that the Pasha should be ordered to withdraw from Dhala (2).

The British Charge found '... an entire ignorance respecting the localities in question ...' at the Porte; he accepted that some confusion arose from different pronunciations and spellings in English and in Turkish (3); but he did not know that the Ottomans were better informed about Dhala than the British. He believed that the Porte was denying that Dhala was an 'Amiri' village only as a pretext for keeping the village. However, in June, under persistent British pressure, the Porte ordered the withdrawal of Ottoman troops from Dhala village.

Late in April, the Porte had offered local talks

- (1) FO 78 2755, Res - S of S No 19, 10.4.74, passed to FO
- (2) FO 78 2755, tel to S of S, passed to FO
- (3) FO 78 2755, HBM Charge - FO, 24.4.74

between the Ottoman Governor-General and the Aden Resident on Dhala (1). Lord Northbrook had anticipated in 1873 that Anglo-Ottoman talks would be necessary to settle a boundary in the Yemen. But the weak position of the Liberal Government in 1873 and the change of Ministry in February/March 1874 made such negotiations inconvenient for the British Government. Lord Salisbury continued Argyll's strong support for Lord Northbrook's Indian administration over the Yemen; and Lords Salisbury and Derby were content with informing the British Charge that Britain would recognise no Ottoman claim to Arabia based on past conquests or on the Sultan's position as Caliph (2). That information may have convinced the Porte that negotiations would achieve nothing. Sidney Locock had advised that '... the susceptibilities of this Government on the question of Turkish domination in Arabia are so strong ... that it would be well to accept the de facto position which we have secured, without insisting on debating a question

(1) FO 78 2755, tel Elliot - FO, 18.6.74

(2) FO 78 2755, FO - Chargé, Constantinople 30.4.74

which is to a Moslem one of principle ...' (1). No local border talks were held.

Amir Ali had retired below the Dhala plateau to his family village, Kharafa, from where he controlled '... only four or five villages ...'. By contrast, his uncle controlled some twenty five villages for the Ottomans (2). The Ottoman Governor General considered that Dhala was under Ottoman administration, and that the 'Amir' had no claim to it (3). The Pasha was, however, prepared to compromise when Amir Ali's uncle was killed whilst collecting taxes. The Ottomans offered to appoint Amir Ali to his uncle's post, if he would accept Ottoman suzerainty (4). The Amir rejected the Ottoman offer and counted on 'the great English Government' to recover for him the 'rights' that he claimed his uncle had wrongfully exercised (4). Ottoman overtures, made through the Mufti of Taiz,

(1) FO 78 2755, Chargé, C'ple - FO, 7.4.74, rec'd 17.4.74

(2) FO 78 2755, Res - S of S, 30.7.74, quoting Pasha of Sanaa

(3) FO 78 2755 f 49, Ottoman telegram of 9.4.74, passed by HBM Chargé to FO

(4) AIA 643 f 411, Amir - Res

emphasized that '... the High Government [the Porte] is a shadow of God on His earth ...' (1). Ottoman calls for local support in this area were to continue to stress religious ties between the Yemenis and the Ottomans throughout this period until the final border settlement in 1902-04. The British feared, and resented, these appeals to religious feelings. The Resident informed the Amir that his report had been forwarded to Britain (2). That was a virtual assurance of British support.

Both Lord Tenterden (3) at the Foreign Office and Aarifi Pasha while Ottoman Foreign Minister, realised that local differences arose, and developed into Anglo-Ottoman disputes, because local rivals looked '... respectively for support to the British and Ottoman authorities ...' (4). Elliot agreed; '... each [competitor] ... attributes any success of his opponent to the support he has received from his Patrons ...' (4).

(1) AIA 643 f 409, Translation Mufti - Amir

(2) AIA 643, Res - Amir, 1.7.74

(3) p.3.93 n.1

(4) FO 78 2755, Elliot - FO, 17.10.74

The Amir was far beyond Residency control; he complained that the Ottomans had diverted the caravan route away from his territory (and so possibly reduced his taxes); and he retaliated by seizing goods belonging to an Ottoman Jewish subject (1). The Resident warned the Amir not to interfere with trade; but the Amir was not ordered to return the goods (2). The Amir's action was probably a calculated slight on the Ottomans. They taxed the Jew; and, by tribal custom, they were therefore his protector from any tribal wrongdoer. Any Ottoman failure to secure redress from the Amir would damage Ottoman prestige, indicating that the Ottomans could not apply force against a British protégé. A Yemeni tribesman might have retaliated personally for any wrong done by the Amir, but a Jew could not.

Early in September, 1874, the Residency received copies of Elliot's correspondence with the Foreign Office about Ottoman troops' withdrawal from Dhala. Elliot had commented that '... the proceedings of the

(1) AIA 643 f 445, Amir - Res in Arabic

(2) AIA 643, Res - SGB, 21.7.74

Porte had been ... such that it ... [was] impossible not to look with some suspicion upon every expression of ... [the Porte's] instructions which ... [was] susceptible to a double meaning ...' (1). The Ottomans had withdrawn their regular troops - but had kept irregulars in Dhala village. Such ambassadorial comments could only confirm existing Residency prejudices that Ottoman promises were not to be taken at face-value (2). Meantime, Husain Avni Pasha, whom Elliot had blamed for provoking the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation of 1873 (3), had become Grand Vizier.

Late in July the Residency had, optimistically, suggested that '... the Ameer would easily regain his position [sic] , if the Turkish officials at Kattaba were peremptorily ordered by the Porte to abstain from ...' supporting the Amir's cousin, who had succeeded the Amir's uncle as an Ottoman official (4). The F.O. drafted a mild note of protest to the Porte; but, at

(1) FO 78 2755, Elliot - FO, 18.6.74

(2) Cf. 3.90 n.1

(3) p.3.101 - 3.102

(4) FO 78 2755 f 245 - f 246, Res - S of S, 30.7.74

the I.O's request, delivery was postponed until 24th December 1874, while the I.O. waited for more proof of Ottoman interference against the Amir. In the interval, the Ottoman protégé remained in Dhala village.

Schneider had returned from leave in Britain in November; he assured the Amir that the British would '... not cease to exert ourselves on your behalf ...' (1); and he wired to the Secretary of State that the position at Dhala was 'unchanged' (2). The Amir was probably sufficiently encouraged to take further provocative measures against Ottoman subjects, for Musurus Pasha complained to Lord Derby about Amir Ali's misbehaviour in January (3). Musurus had also mentioned an Ottoman project for a Yemeni telegraph link with Aden, and the necessity for protecting the proposed line from trouble-makers like Amir Ali. Lord Derby misguidedly considered the Ottoman representations 'a very menacing communication' (4).

(1) AIA 643 f 597, Res - Amir

(2) AIA 643 f 599, tel Res - S of S, 13.11.74

(3) FO 78 2756, Note - Verbale of 4.1.75

(4) FO 78 2756 fs 2-3

But Lord Tenterden commented that the F.O. records were very incomplete, because there was much demi-official correspondence and the I.O. customarily passed on many telegrams to the F.O. 'for information and return' (1).

The Amir visited Aden in December, 1874; the Resident assured him that Ahmad Ayub Pasha had been '... told to withdraw immediately all troops from Dhala in or about the house of the Amir's uncle [sic cousin] ...'. The Amir had then announced his '... intention of endeavouring to displace the usurper ...'. Such resolution was very different to fears of Ottoman power that the Amir had recently expressed (2). He had written that he and his people were 'affrighted' and 'seeking refuge in the hills'. Evidently he received the pledges of support from the Resident that he had demanded, and reassurance that Ottoman artillery at Qataba could not be employed against him (2). Possibly the Resident's awareness of the growing revolt

(1) FO 78 2756 f 29, Res - S of S, 30.1.75

(2) AIA 643 f 605, Arabic letter, Amir - Res

in the northern Yemen encouraged him to reassure the Amir (1). The Resident believed in November 1874 that Ottoman power was '... on the decline ...' in the Yemen (1).

The Resident submitted complaints by the Amir about Ottoman behaviour to London in January 1875 (2). They were passed to the Foreign Office, with critical Indian Government comments on the proposed Ottoman telegraph line to Aden, on 10th March, 1875, by the India Office (3). Elliot was instructed to warn the Porte that, unless Ottoman interference ceased within the territories of the nine tribes, the British Government would be 'reluctant' to support the proposed telegraph line (4). Elliot astutely recognised, from a copy of correspondence sent to the Amir and forwarded to London by the Resident, that the faults might not all be on the Ottoman side (5). Some "Sheikhs of Dhali",

(1) AIA 658 News No 14 of 1.4.74 & No 44 of 21-27.11.74

(2) FO 78 2756 f 29, Res - S of S, 30.1.75

(3) FO 78 2756

(4) FO 78 2756, FO - Elliot, 18.3.75

(5) FO 78 2756, Elliot - FO, 31.3.75

possibly Shairi tribesmen, had rejected the Amir's overtures, emphasising their religious loyalties to the Sultan Caliph. Elliot commented that, if the Amir had proposed that the tribesmen should renounce Ottoman suzerainty, '... such a letter would, however unauthorised, ... inspire in the minds of the Turks ... a distrust of the intentions of the Resident, and a suspicion that he was endeavouring to obtain ... the recognition of British authority over that part of the country ...' (1). But there was no comment on the Foreign Office file on Elliot's remarks.

By encouraging Amir Ali, whom he could not control, and by believing the Amir's claims at the expense of Ottoman counter-claims, the Resident had increased the risk of an Anglo-Ottoman clash (2). But Schneider had wrongly believed that, since Ahmad Ayub Pasha had been ordered by the Porte to withdraw troops from the Dhala area, gendarmes and irregulars would also be withdrawn. Schneider told the Amir that that would happen; and he wrote to the Pasha requesting him '... to direct the

(1) p.8.13 n.5

(2) Cf.p.3,76 n.2

withdrawal of any Zaptiyas or other Turkish officials who might be in Dhala ...' (1). Schneider had read into such brief information as he received more than the Porte had promised. When officials and irregulars remained at Dhala, Schneider considered that the Ottomans had broken a promise.

In June, Elliot protested formally at the Ottoman failure to withdraw troops from Dhala (2). There was no reason for delaying the protest longer for the Ottoman appointment of the Governor General had again been changed (3). In March, the Grand Vizier had made a new appointment to Sanaa the excuse for delaying discussions with Elliot. The Vizier then stated that he wanted to wait till the new Pasha arrived at Constantinople; and Elliot complained that the new Foreign Minister, Safvet Pasha, was '... absolutely unacquainted with the whole subject ...' (4). By the summer, Elliot fully appreciated the Yemen's

(1) FO 78 2756, Res - S of S, 30.1.75, forward to FO, 10.3.75

(2) FO 78 2756 f 60-61

(3) FO 78 2756, Elliot - FO, 3.6.75

(4) FO 78 2756, Elliot - FO, 31.3.75

importance, as the Porte assessed it. Safvet Pasha described a rumour, mentioned by Elliot, that the Porte wished to sell the Yemen to the Khedive for £1,000,000 as 'unfounded'. Such an action would be '... the first step to the end of the Kaliphate ...' (1). Elliot agreed. The Porte had no intention of condoning the surrender of Ottoman territory in Arabia to a foreign Power. The Ottomans had not recognised any British authority outside Aden; they had not admitted British suzerainty over Lahej nor renounced their own (2). The Ottomans were, therefore, unlikely to withdraw from the village of Dhala because a British stipendiary was known to the British as 'the Amir of Dhala' and claimed that village. Until April, 1876, there was no improvement in the Amir's position (3).

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(1) FO 78 2756 f 66-68, Elliot - FO, quoting Safvet

(2) p.3.101 n.2 and p.8.7 n.1

(3) AAR 1875/76, para 9

At the India Office, Lord Salisbury considered, by August 1876 that '... it might be expedient to suggest to the ... Porte that Her Majesty's Government cannot be expected to be satisfied for an indefinite time with constantly renewing remonstrances to which no kind of attention was paid ...' (1). At the Foreign Office, the Porte's troubles in Bulgaria were considered to be a sound reason for Ottoman conciliation of 'the Arabs', to avoid additional trouble in the Yemen (2). There was no evidence of local sentiment favouring the Amir rather than an Ottoman appointee, but that was assumed, despite some indications to the contrary. However, the Amir had benefited by his cousin quarrelling with, and losing the support of, his Ottoman superiors. The Amir was lent a field gun by the Abdali chief and recovered Dhala when his cousin evacuated it (3). That news was, however, received at the Foreign Office after Elliot had been instructed to make another

(1) FO 78 2756, IO - FO, 14.8.76

(2) Note on the Memo Cover (n.1 above)

(3) LA, Res - SGB, copied to S of S, 12.8.76

protest (1). That protest was delivered on 13th September (2).

In Constantinople, Abdul Aziz had been dethroned in May and his successor, Murad, had been replaced on 31st August by Abdul Hamid II. Times were too uncertain for Ottoman Ministers to give much attention to developments in the insignificant Dhala area. But the new Governor General in Sanaa was Mustapha Azem Pasha. His economical reforms possibly contributed to the disaffection of Abdullah Muhammad Mussad at Dhala. The Pasha tried to obtain the Amir's recognition of Ottoman suzerainty in return for Ottoman recognition and for his appointment as an Ottoman official to replace his cousin. Although the Amir refused the Pasha's offer, Mustapha Azem proclaimed Ali Muqbil locally as the new 'Shaikh of Dhala' (3).

General Schneider, the Aden Resident, was on leave in England during the summer; he wrote a Confidential

(1) FO 78 2756, FO - Elliot, 26.8.76

(2) FO 78 2756 f 210, Elliot - FO, Note Verbale No 67
to the Porte

(3) FO 78 2756 f 219, Res 26.8.76 - S of S

Memo on 'Zhali: Turkish Aggression' (1). This probably influenced Lord Salisbury to call for a protest to the Porte. It was Schneider's view that there was '... danger in allowing matters to slide and H.M.'s Government is bound to do all it can to obtain a restoration of Ali Mokbil to the position [sic] he held in 1872 ...'. Failing that, Schneider feared that, when Ali died, an Ottoman nominee would succeed him. He went further and argued that, without British support for the Amir, Ottoman control would spread from Dhala to the Alawi, Subaihi and Haushabi areas. Such an Ottoman expansion would disturb the confidence of the Abdali and Fadhli chiefs. Schneider wanted military support for the Amir if diplomatic measures failed to secure an Ottoman withdrawal.

Captain Goodfellow officiated as Resident during Schneider's leave in 1876; Goodfellow was irritated by Mustapha Azem Pasha's 'interference' in proclaiming the Amir as the Shaikh of Dhala (2). Goodfellow

(1) IOL B 13

(2) FO 78 2756 A9, Res - SGB, 26.8.76 forwarded to S of S by G of I, 28.9.76

proposed that an accredited, native, Agent should be stationed on the border between Ottoman territory and that of the Amir and other stipendiary chiefs (1).

But Schneider, on his return, wisely opposed so forward a policy (2). Such contact in the unsettled state of the stipendiary tribes, would have increased Anglo-Ottoman friction. Both Powers would have been appealed to, as the protectors of their clients' local interests, instead of the customary local settlements of disputes being arranged. In 1877, the Government of India, however, authorised the Resident to arrange a definitive local settlement of the Amir's border with Ottoman territory by arbitration between British and Ottoman officers. Lord Derby, at the Foreign Office, approved the proposal which had India Office support (3). Lord Salisbury had by then visited Constantinople, in December 1876, and had returned critical of the Sultan, the Porte and Elliot.

This border demarcation was never arranged: the

(1) LA, Ag Res - S of S, 12.10.76

(2) LA, Res - S of S, 1.11.76

(3) FO 78 2756, FO - IO, 9.3.77, in reply IO - FO, 3.3.77

Pasha at Sanaa was not authorized to act locally. But the Ottomans, needing all their resources for war with Russia, and hopeful of British support, were conciliatory in 1877-78. The Amir was left in peaceful possession of Dhala (1). The Resident optimistically reported the Amir as having '... no obstacle to success ...' (2). But the Resident was preoccupied with affairs on the Hadhramaut Coast. He was grateful to the Amir for arranging an Abdali Haushabi truce (3); and he later showed his appreciation by the present to the Amir of a howitzer. That was taken up by Captain F.M. Hunter and Major Stevens with the Aden Troop on a first visit to Dhala by British officers in 1880 (4). Hunter and Stevens made a thorough sketch map of the area and Hunter wrote a detailed report, providing clear evidence of Ottoman control in the Shairi area.

This visit contributed to a gradual reassessment

(1) AAR 1876/77, para 11

(2) IOL P & S Vol 5 f 251, Res - SGB, 12.3.78

(3) AAR 1878/79, para 11

(4) FO 78 4528, Res - SGB, 30.3.80, with copy of sketch map and report

of the tribal situation in the Dhala area; for Hunter realised some of the military difficulties of the Aden Troop operating there. Fodder for the horses was in short supply in the summer; and the road north from the Alawi border to the Dhala plateau was ideal for tribal ambushes (1). The road was not under the Amir's control. Since Hunter travelled in company with the Amir the Shairi tribal area was not shown on Hunter's sketch map as being outside the Amir's claimed borders, but most of the Shairi villages were marked in as Ottoman controlled. There were however no Ottoman troops south of Qataba. Later, the Ottomans protested at this British visit to Ottoman territory. But the Amir's influence was on the wane; in April, 1881, the Amir was described as '... weak and foolish ... not strong enough in character or position to enforce obedience over his own family, still less over hill tribes owing him but slight allegiance ...' (2). Yet, the Acting Resident, Goodfellow, had believed that the

(1) AIA 855, Report on visit, 27.9.80

(2) AAR 1880/81, para 22

informal, third party, agreement of 1839 (1) should be formalized by a written agreement between the Amir and the Residency (2). The India Office approved (3). Goodfellow had already signed an agreement, which he considered set out the customary obligations accepted by both sides, on 2nd October, 1880 (4). The Foreign Office asked the Ambassador at Constantinople to propose arbitration (5), but Mr. Goschen was unpopular with the Sultan, who was resentful of British policy and no progress was made. The India Office authorized a direct approach by the Resident to the Governor General at Sanaa (6). But, without the Sultan's authority, Muhammad Izzat Pasha, the new Governor-General at Sanaa, was unable to co-operate (7). No orders came from the

- (1) AF1, Letter of Seiyid Hussain to Cmdr. S.B. Haines of 14.2.39
- (2) AIA 855, Ag Res - SGB, 5.10.80
- (3) FO 78 4528, IO - FO, 12.12.80
- (4) Aitchison 'Treaties' LXVII
- (5) FO 78 4528, FO - HBMA C'ple, 28.1.81
- (6) FO 78 4528, IO - FO, 24.11.81
- (7) FO 78 4528, Pasha - Res, 5.9.82, copy forwarded by IO - FO, 18.12.82

Porte.

Goodfellow believed that an agreement was politically expedient (1); it made the Amir answerable '... for any outrages or wrong doings committed by the tribes Radfan and Halimain ...'. Goodfellow was impetuous; but he may have wished, also, to prevent the Amir intriguing with these neighbouring tribes to embarrass the British. At the same time, it allowed the British to claim to the Ottomans that these tribes were considered to be under the Amir. The Amir's gesture in accepting this responsibility was an empty one; he had no control over these tribes. Indeed, Goodfellow recognised that the Shairi Shaikhs had been independent of the Amirs long before the Ottoman occupation of Qataba (2); and the Shairis were outside the Radfan confederation (3). But the Shairi Shaikh had requested British protection, and a separate agreement. Goodfellow proposed that protection should be given,

(1) AIA 855, para 8, Ag Res - SGB, 5.10.80

(2) n.1 above, para 7

(3) Belhaven 'Uneven Road' p.160 wrote that racially they were 'of the Jaud'

through the Amir, but that a separate agreement should be refused. Goodfellow's strategic aim was to secure a British claim to control all the Dhala plateau. The proposal was, however, unrealistic, because it relied on the Amir. It was objected to by Ismail Haqqi Pasha at Sanaa. He claimed that, whatever the Shairi Shaikh, as an individual, might wish, the Shairis rejected the Amir's leadership, and their territory was Ottoman territory (1).

Goodfellow blamed '... to a great extent ... the acts of subordinate Ottoman officials ...' rather than the administration at Sanaa for a deterioration in the situation at Dhala (2). Indian, and India Office, officials accepted a case which blamed the Amir's opponents for provoking unrest. In reality, Goodfellow was excusing the Amir's arbitrary injustices which provoked the unrest. Later, the cause became more obvious. The Amir and his heir, Shaif bin Saif, were at odds.

(1) AIA 855, Ismail Pasha - Res, received 24.1.81

(2) AIA 855, Ag Res - SGB, 4.10.80

Family support was given to Shaif, not to the Amir (1). A report by the Residency head peon, specially sent by the Resident to Dhala, bluntly blamed the Amir's behaviour for the troubles (2). But the Resident suppressed the report's findings. Instead, he argued that Ottoman irritation at British intervention in Mukalla (3) was being vented on the Amir's innocent head. Loch, the Resident, quoted selectively; it was '... chiefly the family of the late usurper, Mahomed Masaad, [who were] inducing the Amir's people to waver in their allegiance ...' (4). But Muhammad Mussad was the Amir's uncle too; and it was the Amir's own family who had turned against him. Loch admitted that the Amir's opponents '... reside in Turkish villages in the centre and rear of the Amir's territory ...' (2); he blamed the Amir's dissidents

- (1) AIA 855, Letter of Shaif and his cousins to Resident, received 9.10.81
- (2) AIA 855 f 401, Report of Shaweesh Saleh al Azaibi to Resident, 9.10.81
- (3) Cf. p.4.79 n.1
- (4) AIA 855, Res - SGB, 17.X.81

for Ali Muqbil's collisions with the Ottoman authorities. But the Amir's disregard of traditional standards of behaviour (1) and his greed were probably more likely causes.

Loch wanted to commit British resources and prestige to enforcing the Amir's claims. That proposal was unrealistic; the Aden Troop would have been operating beyond reach of support from Aden's small garrison; and Loch knew too little about the area to assess how strong local opposition to the Amir was. The international situation was not opportune for aggressive gestures; Britain was first preoccupied with the Boers and then applying naval and diplomatic pressure on the Sultan for Montenegro's benefit over Dulcigno, in 1881; and Britain hoped for the possible assistance of the Sultan in solving Egypt's problems until September 1882. The Porte was bitter about the

(1) Eg p.8,26 n.1 & AIA 855, Critical letter from Amir's relatives, including his successor, to Resident, detailing the Amir's faults, rec'd 9.10.81

British occupation of Shaikh Othman in 1882 (1), resentful of British action in Hadhramaut, and resentful of the withdrawal of British proposals for co-operation in Egypt after the victory of Tel el Kabir. Once again, the British had failed to appreciate that the Porte, or Abdul Hamid II, could not accept the British case that Ottoman territorial claims in the Yemen did not reach Aden (2). There was no basis for an Anglo-Ottoman agreement on a border across the 'Ottoman' Yemen.

In Lord Dufferin's opinion, as Ambassador to the Porte, there was evidence of intensified Ottoman naval and political religious proposals to counter Christian threats to Ottoman control of Arabia (3). That supported the Indian Government's concern, a year earlier, about possible Muslim propaganda to arouse support for the Caliphate or 'a Mahomedan League' (4). In Aden, a closer watch had been kept on the activities of Muslims

(1) FO 78 4528, HBMA C'ple - FO, 10.10.82

(2) p.3.101 n.2 and 8.7 n.1

(3) FO 78 4528, HBMA C'ple - FO, 28.11.82 with enclosures

(4) AIA 855 f 525, Confidential Circular 3242 of 15.7.81
from SGB - Res

passing through Aden who were collecting money for community charities (1). These traditional activities appear innocuous, but there was suspicion of the Anglophobe Grand Sharif, Abd al/Mutalib, and his connections with the Seiyids of South Arabia.

European suspicion of Muslim attitudes towards Christians was widespread. Allegedly, throughout the Muslim world, Friday prayers for the protection of the Sultan were combined with prayers for the destruction of non-Muslims (2). In such a climate, British hopes for a border demarcation were unrealistic.

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The Qotaibi Shaikh wished to emulate the Abdali chief and to profit by taxes on caravans passing across his tribal borders; he re-established a customs post, earlier destroyed by the Aden Troop (3), and levied

(1) AIA 855, details in File No 12 of 1881 bound in with it

(2) 'La Palestine', Ludovic de Vaux, Paris 1883, p.429

(3) p.10.27 - 10.28

taxes in 1879. He also asked for a treaty with the Residency. Qotaibi territory lay north of Alawi and south of Shairi territory, across the route between Qataba and Aden. The western end, through which the caravan route passed up the Wadi Hardaba, was country in which the Aden Troop could operate, but with some danger. The central and eastern portions covered rugged, mountainous, valleys running up to Jebel Radfan, unsuitable for cavalry. However, the Resident considered that it did '... not seem expedient to increase the number of ... stipendiaries or sub-divide those already in existence ...' (1). But the Indian Government was opposed to any intervention in support of the Amir (2); and the Amir was unable to remove the Qotaibi post. The foreign Department favoured direct negotiations between the Residency and the Qotaibis. In answer to Ottoman enquiries, the Porte was informed that Qotaibi affairs '... exclusively [concerned] the British

(1) AIA 855, Res - SGB, 15.4.82

(2) FO 78 4528, G of I - SGB, 1.2.83

Government and its stipendiary the Amir of Dhala ...' (1). The justification for that claim was slim. The Qotaibis belonged to the Jaud Confederation of Radfan, which Goodfellow had made the Amir nominally responsible for in 1880 (2). But the Resident admitted that, prior to 1873, the Amir had paid an annual blackmail to the Qotaibis, for the protection of the road (3). Ottoman troops had marched through the Wadi Hardaba in 1873. The Qotaibi were not only independent of the Amir, they were possibly in contact with the Ottomans at Qataba. In the Ottoman view, British attempts to coerce the non-stipendiary and independent Qotaibis, like British concern with the Ottoman controlled Shairi tribe, showed that '... les Autorités Anglaises continuent à vouloir empiéter sur nos possessions et ne négligent aucun moyen pour se rallier, à nos depens, les Cheikhs des territoires avoisinants ...' (4). Ottoman

(1) FO 78 4528, FO - HBMA C'ple, 22.5.83

(2) 8.23 n 4

(3) FO 78 4528, Res - SGB, 11.10.84

(4) FO 78 4528, Porte's Note of 11.8.84 presented privately to FO by Musurus Pasha on 23.8.84

indignation was justified; the British were not consistent in claiming influence outside the territory of any of their nine stipendiaries. They had claimed connections with the stipendiaries, only, in 1873. The Qotaibis never admitted any connection with the Amir; and in 1887, the Residency acknowledged that the Amir had no influence over them (1).

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Muhammad Izzet Pasha complained to the Resident on 22nd December 1884, that Ali Muqbil had besieged the Shairi village of Jalila (2). The Ottoman garrison in the Qataba area was possibly withdrawn for service elsewhere during Imam Sharif ud Din's revolt, which began in 1882 (3). The Pasha alleged that the Amir enjoyed British assistance and was provided with a field gun (4). Artillery was greatly

(1) BSC 85-88, Res - SGB, 24/170 of 22.1.87

(2) BSC 81/84, Res - S of S, 11.1.85

(3) BSC 81/84 f 1116, Off Res - S of S, 6.5.84

(4) Delivered 1880, p.8.21 n.4 above

respected by south Arabian tribesmen; and the Amir was able to obtain 8 hostages. The Resident knew that the Shairi area was Ottoman controlled (1); he informed the Pasha that he had told the Amir to cease correspondence with the Shairi Shaikhs (2), and, not to interfere in territory which he did not control in 1880. The Porte was also informed that the Amir had been so instructed (3); but the Foreign Office did not specifically renounce the Amir's claims in the Shairi area.

The Resident now recognised that the Amir's '... capricious vagaries and thoughtless stupidities make it seem hopeless to expect him ... to rule rationally ...'. The Amir thought of '... nothing but his own gain; he care[d] nought for his dependants and followers: he [was] always at feud with his relations: he possess[ed] no dignity and [was] a tyrant at heart ... It [was] difficult to say a good word for him ...' (4).

(1) BSC 81/84 f 1407 has a map of the Shairi borders

(2) BSC 81/84, Res 433 of 1884 & f 1453 Res - Amir

(3) FO 78 4528, tel FO - HBMA C'ple, 16.2.85 & FO Note
Musurus Pasha of 19.2.85

(4) BSC 81/84, f 1376, Res - SGB, 17.11.84

When the Ottomans established a garrison of 250 men at Jalila early in 1885 (1) the Amir retired to Aden. The new Resident disagreed with this criticism of the Amir, he wanted a Border settlement to stabilize the area (2).

The India Office persuaded the Foreign Office that if Ottoman troops were not withdrawn from Amiri'... villages steps would have to be taken to protect the Amir as a British stipendiary ... to maintain British prestige!..(3). On the 14th February, the Resident wired news of Ottoman demands on the village of Khoraiabah, 'below the pass leading to the uplands' (4). Lord Kimberley at the India Office had informed the F.O. that such..!aggressive proceedings ... are assuming a

(1) BSC 85/88, Res - S of S, 17.2.85

(2) BSC 85/88, Res - S of S, 21.4.85

(3) FO 78 4528, IO - FO of 6.2.85. Five villages were named not including Jalila, reported by Res tel of 29.1.85

(4) IO Note - FO of 14.2.85 following Res wire of 14.2.85 to S of S. S of S rarely corresponded direct with the Resident, awaiting Gov. of India's comment before taking any action. Usually correspondence to the Resident went through the Foreign Dept.

serious aspect, and cannot be allowed to continue unchecked'... Most unusually, the Secretary of State wired back asking the Resident what immediate steps he recommended and whether the despatch of the Aden Troop would help '... to stop further aggression without risk of actual collision with Turks ...'.

Granville accepted Kimberley's requirement of a warning to the Porte of 'very serious consequences' if there was encroachment upon Dhala (1); and a wire and a Despatch was sent to Constantinople. Having no clear replies to his verbal remonstrances, the Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople sent the Porte a note asking for a quick, clear reply.

The Ottoman view was that '... Her Majesty's Government ... meet but indifferently the friendly disposition and overtures of Turkey ...;' and that the British representations produced a 'painful impression (2).

(1) FO 78 4528, Kimberley - Granville, 16.2.85

(2) Charge's No 27 of 6.3.85 - FO, quoting the Foreign Ministry Adviser, Fahri Bey, on 3.3.85, to Sir Alfred Sandison of the Embassy

On 19th March, the Chargé d'Affaires reported to the Foreign Office that orders would be sent to Ottoman officers to stop levying tribute in the area; but it was hoped that '... H.M. Govt would not insist on immediate withdrawal of troops ... because the prestige of imperial govt would suffer in Arabia if they appeared to be acting at the bidding of H.M. Govt. ...' (1). The Foreign Office replied with a request for '... positive orders ... without any very great delay ...' and for a border demarcation (2). The Resident assured the Secretary of State that such a demarcation 'need' present 'no great difficulty' and should 'satisfy both sides', besides finally settling the border disputes (3). That showed how little the Residents, who never received courtesy calls from Ottomans in transit through Aden, understood the Ottoman attitude towards Arabia (4).

- (1) FO 78 4528, Chargé Constantinople, tel No 30 of 19.3.85 - FO
- (2) FO 78 4528, FO wire of 11.4.85 - British Embassy, C'ple
- (3) IOL BSC 85/88, Res 15-815 of 23.4.85 - S of S
- (4) L/P&S/10/17 File 137 Pt II, Ag Res - SGB, 14.1.13

Counting on British preoccupation with Somali affairs (1), Ottoman officials tried to obtain local recognition of their suzerainty in Dhala and other Yemeni areas (2). Ottoman action against territory the Amir claimed was explained at Constantinople as due to '... la nécessité de protéger les populations paisible qui se trouvaient en butte à ses [the Amirs] mauvaises procédés . .' (3). No counter action was taken against the Ottoman establishment of a garrison in the Shairi area, at Jalila, '... because the Turkish force ... was too large to be met by any counter-demonstration by the Aden Troops ...' (4). On 21st May Musurus Pasha communicated to the Foreign Office the Porte's 78828/111 to Musurus, claiming Dhala as a part

(1) p.6.37 - 6.72

(2) FO 78 4528, Res 15-315 of 23.4.85 - S of S, submitted to FO on 18.5

(3) FO 78 4528, Ottoman note Verbale of 16.5.85 to Brit. Ambassador forwarded with his No. 271 of 18.5.85 to FO

(4) FO 78 3974, Memo IO - FO, 12.3.85

of the Sanjak of Taiz. Ottoman activities were defended as protecting the rights of Ottoman subjects against the Amir's aggressions. At the Porte, the Foreign Minister explained that Yemen affairs were the concern of the War Minister (1); and the latter was awaiting the preparation of a map on the disputed areas before replying (2). The Ottomans also increased their control in the Subaihi area garrisoning Absi and Kobati territory in 1885/86 (3).

General Schneider and Major Hunter were on leave in England in September 1885; and both wrote, at India Office request, Memos on the Dhala situation (4); both recommended abandoning Dhala to the Ottomans for political and strategic reasons. Both papers pointed out that '... relations with the tribes were not ... in the nature of treaties guaranteeing their independence ...'. The papers emphasized that the Amir's behaviour had alienated

(1) FO 78 3974, HBMA C'ple No 292 of 9.6.85 - FO

(2) FO 78 3974, HBMA C'ple No 349 of 8.8.85 - FO

(3) L/P&S/10/14, Aden Prot. Turkish Aggression Memo by G. Fitzmaurice sent by HBMA C'ple No 805 - FO, 14.12.06

(4) FO 78 4528, Hunter Memo of 28.9.85. Schneider Memo of 1.10.85

local support and that his exactions on the population were more oppressive than the Porte's. Hunter proposed a new framework of treaties with the local tribes:-

| | | | |
|------------------|--------------|---|----------------------|
| "1. Abdali | } now united | } | New treaties to be |
| 2. Subahi | | | made placing those |
| 3. Akrabi | | | tribes under |
| 4. Fadli | | | British protection |
| 5. Haushabi | } | } | Non-cession treaties |
| 6. Alowi | | | etc. |
| 7. Yaffai, Lower | | | |
| Yaffai, Upper | } | } | Independent |
| 8. Aulaki | | | |
| 9. Amiri | | | Abandoned. " |

When these proposals were accepted in principle and passed to the Embassy at Constantinople (1), the Ambassador suggested that, pending the Government of

(1) FO 78 4528, FO 468 of 30.X.85 to Embassy

India's decision, he should relax his efforts to make the Porte delimit the frontier. The India Office agreed (1). This coincided with Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission to the Porte, which made a relaxation of tension desirable. A fierce Zaidi revolt, destroying Ottoman authority in the area, followed. The Ottomans were in no position to profit by a frontier delimitation which was in fact never offered to them officially. It was a decision with which the Resident, General Hogg, disagreed (2); it was based on Major Hunter's personal view, and was a probable cause for the Resident's successful attempt to have Hunter transferred to India. The Resident visited the area and then argued for a delimitation of the frontier, for which he was ready to provide an officer (3). But a note on his letter in the India Office file remarked that; 'The whole question ... was hung up pending the

(1) FO 78 4528, IO - FO, 19.11.85

(2) AIA 1052, A.A.R. para 6. He gave the new Amir 2000 rds in 1889/90 and supported him against the Qotaibis

(3) BSC 85/88, Res 7-279 of 15.2.86 - S of S

receipt of the Government of India's views ...'. But involvements on the Somali Coast meant that there would be no officers available.

The Amir died on 10.9.86 (1): his death was attributed to smallpox, possibly helped by poison (2). He was succeeded by an abler cousin, Shaif bin Saif, then aged about 30, to whom the customary stipend was continued (3).

The Resident maintained the previous practice of supporting the new Amir; he had rejected a local Ottoman protest, of 9.12.85, at a visit by fifty Sabres of the Aden Troop to Dhala, and at the Amir's request, the Resident protested to Aziz Pasha at an Ottoman official of Taiz writing to local Shaikhs in the Amir's area (4). The Pasha accepted that the letters should not have been written (5). But, when the Amir protested

(1) AIA 1074, Ad.An.Rep. 86/87

(2) Jacob 'Kings of the Sea', p.194 says locals blamed poisoned qat leaves

(3) IOL BSC 85/88 Res 365-1852 of 20.9.86 - SGB

(4) IOL BSC 85/88 Res 8/14 of 5.1.86 - SGB

(5) Pasha's letter of 25.3.87 - Res

to the Resident that the Ottomans had secured, in his predecessor's time, villages hereditarily dependent on the Amir, the Resident advised him to rest content with what he had and to secure his people's allegiance by good government, for if they chose Ottoman rule, the British '... might not be prepared to interfere ...' (1). In 1899, General G. O'Moore Creagh reported that the Amir's policy of resistance to absorption had checked his eclipse and tended to consolidate his territory and rule (2). In that, the Amir was helped by the gratitude of the local Ottoman officials who took refuge with him when the Zaidis occupied Qataba.

The Amir's area was officially considered to be outside the area of direct British influence (3); the survey of 1891/92 was not instructed to go up to Dhala. The Amir was not approached as other stipendiary

(1) As quoted n.(2), Res 266-1622 of 12.8.87 - Amir

(2) BSC 97/99, Quoted in Res 347 of 18.11.99 - SGB

(3) AIA 1115 f 511 & f 515, map of area surveyed

chiefs were for their co-operation before the survey began. The Ottomans protested at the Indian Government survey party's intrusion into Ottoman territory near Dhala in 1892, but Capt. R.A. Wahab inaccurately rejected their complaints (1). Possibly he was not aware that Shairi territory belonged to the Ottomans.

The new Amir continued his predecessor's role as a mediator between the Haushabi and Abdali chiefs: and in recognition of his mediation in 1890, which temporarily prevented hostilities, the Resident gave him a rifle (2). But the Residency was not prepared to press the Abdali chief to ban the Qotaibi tribe from visiting Lahej, although the Qotaibis were banned from Aden, at the Amir's request, because of Qotaibi rejection of the Amir's suzerainty (3). But the Resident maintained pressure on the Ottoman Governor General to leave the Amir in peace in May '95 and August '96; but a more powerful factor was probably

(1) AIA 1114 f 931, Wahabs confidential $\frac{B}{44}$ of 3.3.92 - Res

(2) IOL AIA 1095A para 18 AAR 90/91 para 16

(3) IOL AIA 1052 AAR 89/90, para 6

the Zaidi threat to Sanaa in November 1895. The Imam then had 40,000 men under arms (1). In January 1897, however, the Ottoman Governor General intervened to restore looted property, recognising the Amir's position under British ægis; the Pasha hoped that the Amir would treat others as he wanted his own subject treated (2). That made an unrealistic contrast between Ottoman authority and the Amir's slender resources. He could not effectively control the tribesmen he claimed as his subjects.

The Government of Bombay believed in 1899 that British policy was still to allow 'the process of absorption' by the Ottomans, by which '... many villages once Amiri [have become] ... Turkish ...' (3). That was a policy which the Residency continued to oppose as unjustified, because Amiri territory should not have

(1) BSC 89/96, Res 78 of 20.11.95 - S of S

(2) BSC 97/99, Res 347 of 18.11.99 quoting earlier precedent to SGB

(3) FO 78 5098, Bo Resolution 6723 of 30.9.99 - Res, forwarded by For.Dept. - IO, Dec.'99

come under Ottoman influence after 1873 (1). In the Resident's view, while the 'status quo' might be maintained without a protectorate treaty, it could not be guaranteed (2). Lord Curzon believed that the Ottoman threat to Dhala appeared to have been exaggerated (3). He considered that no Protectorate treaty was necessary under the existing conditions. By writing that no action was required, then, but that action might be necessary later, Curzon had quietly reversed British policy. He made it possible for him to propose action in the future with complete consistency.

The Residency dogma that a British stipendiary could not accept another Power's suzerainty was disowned by the Bombay Government in 1898 in Dhala's case, and therefore, by implication, in every other stipendiary's (4).

- (1) Res 233 of 24.7.99 - Bo D.A.G. encl. with (3)
- (2) Res tel of 16.1.00 - SGB encl. with n.1 above
- (3) FO 78 5098, Govt.India Secret No 16 External of 1.2.00 to IO, sent to FO, 28.2.00
- (4) n.3 above, enclosing SGB's no 6531 of 19.11.98

The Amir's reported intention of placing himself under Ottoman protection had been held to be an eventuality which prevented consideration of increasing his stipend (1). The transfer had not taken place, but it was accepted as a possibility; so Amir Ali Muqbil's submission to the Ottomans before May 1873 was belatedly, and privately, accepted as valid.

The Ottoman's claims had not been treated as international law required: there had been British prejudice, and an unnecessary loss of Ottoman prestige, for close on 30 years. The same pattern was going to be repeated, thanks to Curzon's intervention, in the following six years. The Porte's claims in Dhala, and also in the Haushabi, and much of the Subaihi area were valid; and the population preferred Ottoman rule to intervention by local, self-styled 'chiefs', by the Abdalis, or by the British, in their affairs. But British 'amour-propre', and strategical considerations, could not accept that the Yemenis could reject British patronage. Successive Residents feared that Ottoman

(1) FO 78 2753, f 214-216 Res 139-538 of 12.5.78 - SGB

progress, if it was not checked at Dhala, could reach the southern Haushabi Yafai border near Abyan. But the Dhala area was outside the area of official British concern from 1885-1900. Dhala was 'expendable'; and the recognised strategic frontier of Aden began on the northern Haushabi and Alawi borders. But, if Lord Tenterden's proposal for an Anglo-Ottoman border agreement in 1873-74 had been followed, he would have made '... some [such] concessions to the Turks ...' to secure Ottoman agreement (1). In effect, a British Protectorate would have been declared; and Gladstone presciently saw '... every imaginable objection to the proposed Protectorate. It binds us to support those (2) over whose conduct to others we have no control ...'. That prospect was accordingly deferred in the Amir's case for another 30 years.

- (1) FO 78 3974, Memo on a proposed Arabian Coastal Protectorate, quoting Memo by Lord Tenterden of 14.11.73. See p.4.92 n.1 and p.384 n.1 and n.2
- (2) n. 1 above. Gladstone's comment on 17.11.73

Section 9. The Anglo-Ottoman Boundary Commission1901 - 1905

The Haushabi Sultan's health deteriorated between 1891 and 1901 and his control over his tribesmen had been weakened by Abdali action and intrigues (1). The ruthless methods the Haushabi chief used for controlling his people were criticised (2). His Amri tribesmen were on bad terms with him. They therefore allowed one Muhammad Nasr, a Yusifi Shaikh and a minor Ottoman official, to build a tower within Amri limits at adDareja. That, they possibly hoped, would provide them with a safe refuge from their ruler. G.W. Bury stressed that the Ottoman administration was not responsible for the situation (3). This developed into a minor crisis when Muhammad Nasr refused to dismantle his tower. Locally, the Abdali chief was believed to have encouraged Muhammad (4). India Office officials viewed the 'encroachment' as '... a serious

(1) p.7.40

(2) p.9.110 n.2-4

(3) Bury 'Uz' p.23 note 1

(4) AIA/M/53, Cmdt. Aden Troop - First Asst.Res., 13.7.01

disagreement ...' (1) and British military operations were authorised. The tower was stormed in July 1901; and this action was regarded as raising local British prestige (2). It was described as 'restoring order in the Haushabi country' (3). It led to the Anglo-Ottoman border negotiations.

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The Ottoman reoccupation of the Shairi area with a military garrison, at Jalila in 1901, alarmed the Amir (4). His two smaller enclaves could be effectively isolated by the Ottomans. The Resident knew that the Ottoman reoccupation altered the local situation on the Dhala plateau. The Amir, encouraged by British action at adDareja, asked whether the British would resist Ottoman expansion at his own expense (5). He claimed, improbably,

(1) IOL B 136, Lee-Warner's Comment of 18.6.02

(2) Details of operations in AIA/M/53

(3) IOL BSC 1900/1902 U/S, IO - U/S FO, 30.7.1901

(4) AIA/M 44, Amir - Res's First Asst. received 21.9.01.

Amir wrote from Lahej

(5) AIA M 44, Amir-Res. First Asst., received 23.9.01

that he would do so. These approaches by the Amir were possibly prompted by the Abdali chief, who wished to prevent Ottoman forces moving south down to the Haushabi border, where they might influence tribal opinion against the Abdali chief (1). As a result of the Amir's enquiries, the Resident sent his First Assistant, Major J. Davies, to visit the Dhala area at the end of October (2). Davies had found the Ottoman position much as it had been when Hunter visited the area in 1880, with the 1885 addition of a garrison at Jalila.

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The Officiating Resident, General P.J. Maitland, was informed of the Ottoman proposal for a frontier delimitation on 31st October, 1901 (3); he was asked to postpone Davies' departure for Dhala at the request

(1) Jacob 'Kings' p.102-103

(2) AIA/C 28, Res - First Asst., 29.10.01

(3) AIA C 28, tel SGB - Res

of the India Office (1). Maitland could have recalled Davies, who had only left two days before, but it is probable that Maitland wanted more detailed information about the Dhala area than he had. The Secretary of State was not informed of Davies' departure until 2nd November (2). Maitland expressed his views in a long demi-official letter to Sir William Lee-Warner, at the Political and Secret Department of the India Office, on 6th November (3). Maitland wanted a preliminary survey of the area to be demarcated, going further north-east than Capt. R.A. Wahab's survey of 1891/92; he wanted a delay before arrangements were made with the Porte for the demarcation; and, in the interval, he wanted Protectorate treaties with the Chiefs of Beihan, Beidha and the Upper Yafai areas, but not Dhala, to be

- (1) L/P & S/IO/63, Lee-Warner was responsible for proposing to stop Davies once news of the Ottoman wish for a Commission was received
- (2) AIA C 28, tel Res - S of S
- (3) AIA C 28

approved. In Maitland's view, the demarcation should cover the whole border from Ras alAra (1), on the Indian Ocean, some 30 miles east of Shaikh Said, to the Rub alKhali desert. That demarcation would block Ottoman access to Hadhramaut. It was, as Lee-Warner minuted, '... a useful letter, although we may not agree with all of it ...' (2). A copy was sent to the Foreign Office.

Lee-Warner had few illusions; '... the situation in the Amir's country is peculiar - the Dthali Amir is a British stipendiary who nominally rules over a collection of tribes, some of whom are undoubtedly under Turkish rule ...'. Villages are '... mixed together in the wildest confusion ...'; it was, therefore, impossible to be guided by '... tribal rather than geographical considerations [as Maitland wished] - and a certain amount of give and take will be necessary in order to secure a workable frontier line ...' (2).

(1) Later, in 1904, Maitland claimed much more, including Shaikh Said

(2) L/P & S/10/63, Minute dated 19.11.01

Lee-Warner appreciated that Wahab's survey would only provide a guide for the western portion of the frontier; and that Lord Curzon and the Foreign Department wanted to include all the south coast within British limits, whereas Maitland did not claim the most westerly 30 odd miles. Lee-Warner considered that Curzon's proposed northern border should run east from the northernmost point of the Amiri border. That border would not have reached the Rub alKhali to block an Ottoman expansion eastwards to Inner Hadhramaut. Lee-Warner's draft proposed acceptance, after Anglo-Ottoman negotiations, of an arbitrary frontier line dividing the Amiri area between British influence and Ottoman control, with both portions 'under' the Amir.

Lee-Warner warned his colleagues; 'We must be very firm and not allow either the Government of India, or the Amir, to alter the 'status quo'. The Amiri country quite differs from the Haushabi country, and the Turks certainly have some rights over the Amiris ...' (1). Lord George Hamilton, the Secretary of State, noted

(1) L/P & S/10/63 Lee-Warner's minute of 28.10.01

Lee-Warner's comments on 30th October. Maitland's expansionist aims were again criticised by Lee-Warner on 3rd December (1). Following Davies' report of his visit to Dhala in November, the Resident claimed a much larger area for the Amir, as a British stipendiary.

Lee-Warner noted; 'We can do nothing. Everything must be left to the Com^{ion} on the spot' (1). Six days later Lee-Warner commented; '... The opportunity is wholly unfavourable for going behind the Wahab Line of 1892 ... (2) In our present international position it would savour of grab to ask Turkey to accept a line, and after showing the line to say not this but another. All appearances would be against us ...'.

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Curzon had proposed to consult the Bombay Secretariat about his proposals for a Boundary Demarcation (3). The

- (1) L/P & S/10/63, Correspondence copied to FO and Lee-Warner's minute on Davies' Report
- (2) Reference was frequently made to this line shown on Map F
- (3) L/P & S/10/63, Tel Viceroy - S of S, 2.10.01

Bombay Secretariat asked the Resident for '... proposed instructions to our Commissioners ...' (1). The Resident commented telegraphically; '... Wahab's line makes bad frontier and would be ... unjust to Amir, who is now in possession of a number of villages to the west of it ...'. Maitland's comments were based on Davies' Report from the area. Later events proved that Davies accepted the Amir's claims, unjustifiably, at face value. It is possible that the Amir was encouraged to make excessive claims, and, subsequently, to bring neighbouring tribal sections into contact with the British Commissioners, by the Abdali Chief. The latter was a consummate intriguer in Yemeni politics, corresponding with the Imam, the Ottomans and with various Yemeni Chiefs (2).

Correspondence from the Border area by tribesmen claiming to seek British connections continued from the time of Davies' departure from Dhala until the arrival of the British Commissioners late in January, 1902, and continued thereafter (3). The Resident, who was in no

(1) AIA/C 28, tel SGB - Res, 17.11.01

(2) Cf. Jacob 'Kings', p.88 and p.141

(3) E.g. AIA C 28 p.145. Letter from Azraki, Mahrabi & Ahmadi tribesmen to Major Davies, rec'd 27.11.1901

position to check the standing of the writers, or the genuineness of their letters, accepted such correspondence as justification for claiming that the Amir's border lay to the west of Wahab's survey limit (1). Only later did the Resident learn that these tribes paid no tithes to the Amir; but, by then, the Resident had made out his case that these tribes strategic '... position makes it highly desirable that they should be on the British side of the frontier line ...' (1).

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The Viceroy proposed the following instructions for the British Commissioners; '...Aden delimitation ... The line should commence at western limit of Atiffi section of Subaihi tribe, near Ras Tunba [sic Turba] and follow the border of Subaihi and Haushabi tribes. Here, there is probably no need of going beyond Wahab's line of 1891. There will probably be more difficulty in

(1) AIA C 28, Res - SGB, 1.12.01, forwarding n.3
p. 9.8 above.

the Amiri country, owing to interlacing of villages, and here Wahab should endeavour to return on the British side all villages paying revenue to, or in the actual occupation of, the Dhali Amir; and also villages within tribal limits of which the Turks cannot prove continuous occupation, tribal rather than geographical considerations being guiding principle. Wahab should inform the Turks that the Upper Yafai and Upper Aulaki are covered by our declaration of 1873, which asserts the right of the British Government to make such arrangements with all nine tribes as may from time to time be desirable, although this right has not hitherto been reserved in these two cases. If our tribes show anxiety, or willingness to define this section of the boundary by agreement, the line we should claim would be the northernmost limit of the Upper Yafai and Wahidi (1) tribes, which tract should also be stated to include the minor chiefships of Beda [Beidha] and Behan [Beiha] .

- (1) AIA C 28 fl77, Marginal file comment by Maitland; 'Aulaki ? The Wahidi are not included in the "nine tribes".'

Any point on which the Commissioners fail to agree to be reserved and referred to their respective Governments. Please telegraph if you approve.' (1).

Later, Curzon blamed the India Office for inadequate preparation. The India Office's reply showed an understandable reluctance to issue definite orders in the incomplete state of intelligence on the frontier (2). Much was left to the good sense of the British Commissioners. In principle, the western limit of Wahab's survey was accepted as probably a suitable approximate line; but variations from that line, agreed between the British and Ottoman Commissioners, would be accepted. However, a qualified ^Papproval was also given to the Foreign Department's conflicting instructions. In particular, the Upper Yafai and Upper Aulaqi areas were accepted as being within a British protectorate, as Curzon wanted - provided Ottoman agreement could be

- (1) AIA C 28, tel For.Dept. - SGB, 27.11.01 repeating For.Dept's. tel of 26.11.01 - S of S
- (2) AIA C 28 f253, tel For.Dept. - SGB, 20.12.01 quoting S of S tels of 9.12.01 & 17.12.01

obtained.

The India Office instructions read as follows:-

'... The importance of securing an outer line which the Turks will respect outweighs any advantage of attempting tribal division. Secondly, that we have appealed to Wahab's line in past controversies, and even shown the map to the Turkish Ambassador, and are disposed to follow it as far as it goes. Thirdly, that if the Commissioners agree to an amendment of the line we need not object; and we ourselves may retire the line at points if desirable. Otherwise I agree to your proposals, except that reservations of final reference to respective Governments must be qualified by these propositions.

As regards the Upper Yafai and Upper Aulaki I agree to instruction, but if difficulties are raised as to the instructions you propose, I would detach this portion of our protectorate from the present discussion ...'.

News of the Foreign Office's approval of the India Office's instructions was received in India on 17th December (1). The Foreign Office added a caution;

(1) AIA C 28, S of S - Viceroy

'... the number of points reserved for decision by the two Governments should be limited as much as possible in order to avoid difficulty with the Porte'. The India Office's telegram ended; 'Please instruct Wahab accordingly and inform the Resident'.

The Resident produced a private 'Memo of Instructions regarding Delimitation of frontier as contained in S of S's telegrams of 9th and 17th Dec^r and in Viceroy's telegram to S of S of 26th Nov.' (1). Maitland gave a copy of this ambiguous amalgamation of instructions to Lt. Colonel R.A. Wahab, the Senior British Boundary Commissioner (2). No copies were sent elsewhere. Maitland's Memorandum combined and distorted the various instructions to read just as Maitland wished. Wahab's survey line could be altered as a frontier by 'arranging small exchanges of territory if this seems expedient' (3). '... Tribal rather than geographical considerations are

(1) AIA C 28 f 257. No date but probably written about 26th Dec.

(2) AIA C 29 f 333 contains a reference to Wahab's copy

(3) No reference was made to any need to secure Ottoman agreement

to be considered ... although geographical considerations ... need not be altogether ignored ...' (1). Ottoman claims '... to villages which have not been continuously occupied by them may be opposed ...'. 'Continuously' was to mean 'during the last ten years' (1), thus ensuring that Ottoman claims would be invalid, in Wahab's and Maitland's opinions, because the Ottomans had been forced out of the area in 1891/92 during the Zeidi revolt.

Maitland had no doubts about the British rights '... with regard to the Upper Yaffai and Upper Aulaki, with whom at present we have no treaties; the Turks are to be informed that these tribes are covered by the declaration of 1873, which asserts the right of the British to make such arrangements with the "nine tribes" as may from time to time prove desirable...'. But a demarcation of the frontier beyond the north-eastern border of Dhala was to depend upon the Ottoman Commissioners' agreement to the work. Failing such an agreement, no demarcation was to be attempted beyond Dhala. Maitland possibly had some idea of the

(1) A marginal note by Maitland

difficulties of the terrain and realised that local opposition to foreign interference was strong.

Maitland was not alone in considering that the British Boundary Commissioners were to be guided both by the original instructions of the Viceroy (1), and, by the later comments of the Secretary of State (2). The Foreign Department instructed the Bombay Secretariat that '... Wahab ... should take Viceroy's telegram of 26th November as indicating the aims to be attained, bearing in mind the views of the Secretary of State if points are disputed or differences arise...' (3). Copies of this telegram were passed to Wahab and Maitland "for information and guidance" on 27th December.

From the beginning it was clear that much was going to be left to Wahab's discretion. On 26th December, the Foreign Department informed the Bombay Secretariat that Wahab was to decide whether the Joint Commission should start from the coast and work north-eastwards,

(1) p.9.11 n.1

(2) p.9.12 n.1

(3) AIA C 28, For.Dept. - SGB, 23.12.01

or work from Dhala south-westwards (1). The Ottoman instructions, however, were to begin near Qataba; and the Ottoman Governor-General had no choice (2). On 15th January, Amir Shaif bin Saif was warned that Wahab and Major H.M. Abud, the new First Assistant Resident, who had replaced the sick Major Davies, would be arriving shortly at Dhala (3). The Amir was asked to provide guides when necessary. The Ottoman Governor-General was told that the British Commissioners would arrive about 29th January.

British interest in the frontier area had disturbed the 'status quo'; the arrival of the British Commissioners stirred up the Yemeni tribesmen more. En route to Dhala the British Commissioners met the Qotaibi Shaikh (4); he had already decided to visit Aden, although his relations with Residency staff had for a long time been cool, because he persisted in taxing caravans passing

(1) AIA C 28, tel For.Dept - SGB

(2) AIA C28, tel Res - Gov.Gen.Sanaa 4.1.02
tel Gov.Gen.Sanaa - Res, 11.1.02

There was no direct telegraph between Aden and Sanaa

(3) AIA C 28, Res - Amir, 15.1.02

(4) AIA C 28, Abud - Res, from Jimil, 24.1.02

through his territory (1). Abud urged that the Shaikh should again '... receive presents, etc. ...' which he had not received for many years. Nominally, the British claimed that the Qotaibis were 'under' the Amir. Practically, the Qotaibis had never recognised Amir Shaif as having any control over them (2): and the Amir claimed no such authority (3). The Qotaibis were just one of over six tribal areas which the British loosely referred to as 'Amiri', but which the tribesmen considered to be quite separate. Unless the Ottoman Commissioners could be persuaded to accept such areas as 'Amiri', the Amir would be surrounded in his three isolated enclaves, by Ottoman territory.

When the Commissioners arrived at Dhala, Abud wrote: '... the weak point of our position is the tacit admission of our Government of the Turkish claim to Jalila - it dominates the whole valley ... The only routes from the alKhureiba Pass or from Dhala north-

(1) p.9.16 n.4

(2) AIA 1115, Wahab - First Asst.Res., 25.12.91

(3) AIA M 44, Arabic Letter Amir - Capt. Pottinger, Asst. Res., rec'd 1.9.02

wards ...pass close under it ...' (1). Abud believed that no satisfactory settlement was possible if the Ottomans were 'allowed' to hold it. He wanted Maitland to impress on the Government the importance of acquiring Jalila; and, recognising the validity of Ottoman claims, Abud saw the consequent need for '... giving money compensation if possible to secure [Jalila and a frontier] line compatible with our obligations to the Amir!... Maitland sent extracts from Abud's letter about Jalila to Lee-Warner at the India Office (2). No one referred to the inevitable Ottoman objections to any such sales.

Abud had no sooner arrived at Dhala than he began referring to 'our obligations to the Amir'. Such references were incompatible with a demarcation of the existing Amiri-Ottoman border; Jalila was the home of the principal Shairi Shaikh; it had a large Ottoman garrison; and the Ottomans had controlled the area,

(1) AIA C 28, Abud - Res from Dhala, 27.1.02

(2) AIA C 28, Note on Abud's letter initialled by Maitland

either directly or through the Shaikh, since 1873 (1). But the British Commissioners were instructed to accept the western limit of Wahab's map, published in 1893, as the approximate frontier line. Jalila, and the whole Shairi tribal area, which Wahab's surveyors had not marked as Ottoman territory, were well within the western limit of that survey, and might therefore be presumed to be within the British border. One disadvantage of the absence of agreed Anglo-Ottoman instructions for the work of the Boundary Commission was now obvious. The British Commissioners did not consider themselves bound to demarcate the existing frontier; instead, they wished to negotiate a new frontier, to the Amir's benefit.

Wahab remarked that the western limit of the 1891 survey '... is quite in our favour [as a boundary] , unless the Turks are hopelessly obstinate in sticking to their present positions on the Dhala plateau ...' (2).

(1) AIA C 28 D10, Maitland - Lee-Warner, 6.2.02

(2) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 29.1.02

But Wahab was even then looking beyond the limits of his survey. He remarked that the Amir's revenue accounts showed payments to the Amir by the westerly Miharabi, Ahmadi, Mafari and Humedi tribes; the Humedi was '... a tribe not noticed before, west of the Ahmadi ...' (1). Less than two months before, the Resident had written that the first three tribes paid no taxes to the Amir (2), when forwarding a petition by individual tribesmen, asking for their inclusion with⁻ⁱⁿ the Amir's territory.

The Amir evidently tried to secure sympathy by suggesting that he had suffered from the ex-Native Assistant's corrupt practices. Muhammad Salih Jaffer had been dismissed in 1900. Abud implied, in 1905, that Muhammad Salih's dismissal was due, in part, to Abdali intrigue (3). But Wahab accepted the Amir's charges that he was robbed of part of his revenue, subsidy and presents, and denied access, with his

(1) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 29.1.02

(2) AIA C 28, Res - SGB, 1.12.01

(3) IOL File 758/1908 - H.M. Abud's letter, Appendix J of G.W. Bury's petition of Nov. 1905 to Gov. Bombay

complaints of Ottoman aggression, to the Resident by Muhammad Salih (1).

Muhammad Salih was probably not, as Wahab alleged, 'a Turkish agent'. Corruption was an accepted part of the Indian way of administration, partly attributable to the low rate of local pay (2). Maitland, however, accepted the Amir's explanation that Ottoman advances had occurred at his expense because of Muhammad Salih's failings (3). In Wahab's, Maitland's, and even in Abud's views, 'honour' required that British officials should try to make up to the Amir for what, the Amir alleged, were past British failings. That attitude was opposed to Lee-Warner's acceptance of dual allegiance by the Amir to both the British and the Ottomans (4). It is probable that the British officers were less concerned about increasing the Amir's local prestige than about

(1) p.9.20 n.2

(2) Cf. Lawrence 'India' p.244

(3) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 29.1.02. Marginal file note of Maitland's, reads 'sent to Lee-Warner'.

(4) p.9.6 n.1

securing a more strategically desirable, and clearly definable, frontier. So long as Ottoman and Amiri villages, and, still more, fields and grazing areas, were interwoven on the Dhala plateau, Ottoman and Amiri charges and counter charges would persist. The British Commissioners later claimed that any British failure to support the Amir might forfeit other stipendiary Chiefs' loyalty.

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Wahab's attitude towards the Shaibis, who were never claimed as Amiris, who lived beyond the north-eastern limits of Amiri territory, and who, therefore, were outside the probable scope of the Commissions' work, illustrates his concern about a strategic frontier. Wahab had discussed British protection for the Shaibis by 31st January. In his view, '... even if it would add a little to the amount to be paid in subsidies it would be money well spent ...' (1). The Shaibi area overlooked

(1) AIA C 28, Wahab - Maitland, 31.1.02

the Dhala plateau on the north-east. Wahab described the Shaibi Shaikhs as 'the most uncouth lot we have met so far, but a very intelligent and apparently well-disposed lot, whom ... we ought to try to include ... within our boundary ...' for strategic reasons. The Shaibis had no previous connections with the British; and the Ottomans had annexed their area. Yet, within a week of arriving at Dhala, Wahab was entertaining 'these half-clothed Arabs', and proposing alterations to the 'status quo' on the frontier. It is probable that the Amir worked with Ali Muhsin Askar of Mausedda to arrange for the Shaibis' visit. The ill-written Shaibi application for British protection asked for the arrangements to be made through the Amir (1); but the Shaibis wanted a direct agreement with the British, as an independent tribe, not as clients of the Upper Yafais, or of the Amir. When Shaibi tribal leaders came through Ottoman picquet lines in force to visit Wahab in 1903, he payed them the large sum of MT\$ 740 for their blatant disregard of Ottoman objections (2).

(1) AIA C 28, Sh.Ali.Mani Saqladi - Wahab, rec'd 11.1.02

(2) AIA C 33, Wahab - Res, 6.5.03

Wahab also paid Ali Muhsin Askar handsomely for 'introducing' the Shaibis to him (1).

In Aden, Maitland was also upsetting the 'status quo' by assuring the Chief of Beidha and some Upper Yafai Shaikhs '... that they are considered within the sphere of British influence, and that treaties may be concluded with them as soon as the demarcation is concluded ...' (2). There had been earlier contacts, but no previous suggestions of Protectorate treaties. In hinting at treaties to these Yemenis, the Resident was acting on his own initiative, but he had the justification of the India Office tentatively including the Upper Yafais and Upper Aulaqis within the British sphere of influence (3). His aim was to strengthen the British position at a vulnerable point on the frontier. But, from the Ottoman point of view, the Resident's actions were provocative. In 1900, the Upper Yafai area was accepted by Indian officials as

(1) p.9.23 n.2

(2) AIA C 28, Res - Wahab, 12.2.02

(3) p.9.11 n.2 and p.9.12. n.1

being beyond British influence: the Upper Aulaqi area was remoter (1).

The Foreign Department wanted no publicity for the Commission's work; all the British officers were warned that they should not make '... any communication ... to the public press in India ... or in England regarding the progress of the work of the Commission ...' (2). It is probable that the Foreign Department was concerned to avoid criticism in Britain and abroad. Curzon wished to 'grab' additional territory and to impose a boundary that met his requirements for the better isolation of Aden by land from foreign contacts. Press reports might provoke controversy, discussion and criticism. Considerable expense was involved; and there were no easily identifiable benefits. Later, during 1904, The Times carried regular brief reports from Aden and from Constantinople.

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(1) BSC 1900/1902, tel Res - S of S (r) SGB 29.1.1900

(2) AIA C 28, U/S FOR.DEPT. - SGB, 4.2.02

British and Ottoman motives in wanting a border demarcation in the sensitive Dhalai and Haushabi areas were different. The Porte wished to avoid any more Anglo-Ottoman clashes, damaging to Ottoman prestige, such as had occurred at ad/Dareja (1). But the Porte did not wish to recognise any international Anglo-Ottoman 'border', because the Porte recognised no British claims in Arabia. The Porte proposed, as the Boundary Commission's Ottoman Secretary emphasised (2), the demarcation of the existing boundary between the Sanjak of Taiz and the Nine Cantons, in the neighbourhood of Aden, in treaty relations with the British. The Ottomans claimed sovereignty over all Arabia (2). Sultan Abdul Hamid considered that it was '... his sacred duty not to give up territory to which he believed he was entitled ...' (3). The Ottoman description of the demarcation implied only a distinction between Ottoman-administered

(1) p.9.2 n.2

(2) AIA C 28, Wahab's tel 17.2.02 - S of S (r) SGB, reporting the First Meeting

(3) AIA C 31, tel HBM C'ple - FO, 24.10.02, reporting an interview with Sultan

and unadministered, territory.

The Foreign Office's aim was to obtain an acknowledged border line which the Ottomans would not cross to approach closer to Aden. The non-committal Foreign Office instructions were '... to delimit the boundary between the territories of the tribes in the vicinity of Aden having direct relations with His Majesty's Government and the Dominions of His Majesty the Sultan ...' (1). The word 'Dominions' was considered to be sufficiently vague to avoid expressing any opinion as to the nature of Ottoman sovereignty, or suzerainty, or administration, beyond the British sphere of influence (1); and no reference was made to a British 'Protectorate' or to a British 'Sphere of Influence', to avoid offending the Porte. But both these terms were used in contemporary correspondence between Aden, India and London to describe the territory of the stipendiary tribes (2). But a contemporary legal

(1) IOL BL36, Lee-Warner's IO Memo of 18.6.02 on
Boundary Commission

(2) AIA C 28, Resident - Wahab, 12.2.02. IOL L/P & S/10/15
Memo Fitzmaurice 8.8.05 for U/S FO, passed to IO, 31.8.05

authority, Professor J. Westlake, specifically excluded '... the Arab Chiefs at the back of Aden ...' from his analysis of Colonial Protectorates (1). By eventually accepting the wording of the Ottoman proposal the British had tacitly admitted the ~~friction~~, from the British viewpoint, that the nine Cantons were subdivisions of the Ottoman Province of Taiz (2).

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The Ottomans had proposed that the demarcation could be arranged at informal meetings of British and Ottoman officers already serving locally (3). The Government of India had envisaged a year's work by a Joint Commission with qualified surveyors specially appointed for the survey work. Neither the Porte nor

- (1) J. Westlake 'International Law', Cambridge, 2nd edition, 1910, p.141.
- (2) L/P & S/10/15 File 137 Pt.II, Memo by G. Fitzmaurice - U.Sec. FO of 8.8.05
- (3) L/P & S/10/63, HBM Amb. C'ple - FO, 26.10.01, passed to IO

the Foreign Office had any reason to foresee problems in a straightforward demarcation of an existing border. The 'de facto' limits of Ottoman authority and of the Amir of Dhala's authority were known locally; and the Foreign Office accepted the conciliatory India Office view that the British Commissioners should be prepared to give up territory to obtain a clearly defined line acceptable to the Porte (1).

Disagreements arose because the Porte and the Foreign Office did not exchange views and agree on instructions for their Commissioners. The British Commissioners, the Resident, the Government of Bombay, and most importantly, the Viceroy, had far less conciliatory attitudes than those held at the India Office and at the Foreign Office.

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The first meeting of the Joint Commission, on 11th February, 1902, at Dhala, set a pattern of British

(1) AIA C 28, S of S - Viceroy, 17.12.01

charges of Ottoman obstruction, later extended to bad faith, that was to continue for three years. The Ottoman Commissioners '... claimed whole Shairi tribe, Jabal Juhaf and Mafari as belonging to District of Kataba ...' (1) in defining Ottoman territory adjoining the Amir's land. The British Commissioners ~~rejected~~ these reasonable Ottoman claims. The Amir had submitted claims to some of this area to Wahab. But Wahab, and the Resident, complained principally to the Foreign Department, and to the India Office, about Ottoman claims that '... Amir and Chiefs under British protection hold their countries under authority of Turkish firmans ...'. Wahab alleged that that Ottoman claim, if accepted, '... threatened ... our whole position in Southern Arabia ...' (1). The Commission's work was suspended while the dispute was referred home.

If Britain recognised Ottoman suzerainty over all the Yemen, the territory of Yemeni tribes which had no stipendiary agreements with the British was open for

(1) AIA C 28, tel Res - S of S, 17.2.02, based on Wahab's report of 12.2.02

Ottoman administration and occupation. The 'status quo' would then only be preserved in the territory of the British stipendiary tribes; and the British Commissioners had appreciated on their arrival at Dhala that the Amir could only claim three isolated enclaves. Previously, the British had accepted that there were 'independent' tribes in the Southern Yemen, outside British or Ottoman influence (1). But, by accepting the Ottoman definition of the Commission's duties, the area was under either British, or, Ottoman, influence. So Wahab wrote to Maitland:- '... Unless we can prove that many of the small tribes which cannot be included generically under the nine tribes are subjects of one of the nine tribes they must fall 'a fortiori' to the Turks ... who, in some cases, have never even entered their countries ...' (2).

(1) 'Britannica', 1902 edn, p.518. Article on Arabia by Sir T.H. Holdich, under whom Wahab surveyed the Pamirs in 1895/96

(2) AIA C 28, Wahab - Maitland, 12.2.02

The Ottoman Ambassador correctly pointed out to the Foreign Office that the Commission's work was suspended because the British Commissioners denied the validity of Ottoman firmans appointing the Shairi Shaikh as a proof of Ottoman control over the Shairis (1), and because they counter-claimed the area for the Amir. The Ambassador asked that the British delegates should be instructed not to raise claims to territories outside the Nine Cantons. The Ottoman representations received no definite answer because the British Government was '... awaiting a full report ...' (2) but the matter was not followed up, and later, charges and counter-charges overlaid this valid Ottoman complaint.

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Wahab's King's Commission appointed him
'Commissioner for the demarcation of the frontier between

(1) FO 78 5242, Ottoman Amb. London - FO, 26.2.02

(2) FO 78 5242, n.1 above, note on file

the territory of the tribes near Aden with which H.M.'s Government have direct relations and the Turkish territory' (1). Those tribes were known, but the British Commissioners intrigued with others, the Amir's tribal neighbours, to obtain statements that the tribes accepted the Amir's suzerainty, or, that, as Yafais, they wanted treaties (2). Probably as a counter measure, the Ottomans strengthened their local patrols and increased their guardposts. That made local contact with the British, across the Ottoman lines, more risky. Wahab complained that the increased Ottoman military activity was a breach of the 'status quo' (3). But the arrival of the British Commissioners at Dhala, nearly two weeks before their Ottoman counterparts, had itself disturbed the 'status quo'. As the Resident

(1) FO 78 5242, dated 12.2.02. There is no file copy.

(2) Eg. AIA C 29, Wahab Res. Secret 3.4.02, reported a secret rendez-vous with an Ottoman-appointed paramount Shaikh of Jebel Mafari

(3) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 11.2.02, on Ottoman Arab irregulars moving into the Ottoman Mafari area

remarked, the tribesmen were '... poor and avaricious and of course try to make what they can out of us, but a few hundred rupees in presents goes [sic] a long way ...' (1). Wahab had given cash presents lavishly during his Survey in 1891-92 (2); he had maintained that such behaviour was customary amongst Residency officers in the interior. He did the same in 1902-1904. British liberality brought in both 'independent' and Ottoman-dominated tribesmen. Not all such visitors were truly Anglophile. After British operations in the Shaibi area in 1903 against 'dissidents', some dead Shaibi opponents were wearing clothing given to them as presents by the British Boundary Commissioners (3).

Not surprisingly, the Ottoman Ambassador protested at British military detachments travelling outside the area under the Amir's jurisdiction and within Ottoman

(1) AIA C 29, Res - Wahab, 3.3.02

(2) AIA 1115 f 363 & f 421, Wahab spent over MT~~£~~ 1000 in January, 1892, alone

(3) Bury 'Uz' p.34

territory (1). As Lord George Hamilton recognised, Wahab '... had a tendency to enlarge his enquiries to the Amir's claims which had nothing to do with the status quo ...' (2). Hamilton realised, helplessly, that '... the Aden delimitation is getting into a regular mess ...' (3). British surveying parties were sent out into Ottoman-claimed territory and an Ottoman strengthening of their patrols followed. Such Ottoman moves inconvenienced the Amir, and he threatened quasi-military counter-moves (4). The Amir employed 'non-Amiri' Halmain tribesmen to collect revenue from 'Amiri' villages beyond the Ottoman picquets adjoining Shairi country.

Wahab mistrusted the attitude of the India Office to the negotiations; he complained that '... we cannot definitely offer [the Shairis] British protection for

(1) FO 78 5242, Ott.Ambassador - FO, 12.3.02

(2) FO 78 5242, U/S IO - U/S FO, 13.3.02

(3) C.P. Hamilton-Curzon, 25.3.02

(4) AIA C 29, D/O Wahab - Res, 6.5.02

you know how our Government from motive of policy throws over its protégés, and ... they may give in all round simply to get a settlement ...' (1). Wahab, however, had decided that he must include Shairi territory within British limits (2); and, failing any other ground, he claimed them as the Amir's 'dependents' (3). The Shairi Shaikh was a local Ottoman official, however, and he did not approach Wahab until after the Ottomans had been forced out of the area by British ^{and} naval/diplomatic pressure in 1903. Wahab never mentioned this fact, nor the general local anglophobia amongst the settled villagers (4). Throughout the Yemen prayers in the mosques were said for the Sultan (5).

The Foreign and India Offices agreed that '... the sole object of the Commission was to define existing boundaries by local investigation ...' (6). Past

(1) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 28.2.02

(2) AIA C 28, D/O Wahab - Maitland & D/O Abud - Maitland, 29.1.02

(3) BSC 1900/02 Wahab - S of S, 16.3.02 & For.Dept., 12.3.02

(4) Bury 'Uz' p.20

(5) Jacob 'Kings' p.82

(6) AIA C 29 f 53, tel. SGB - Res, 4.3.02 quoting S of S tel to G of I of 28.2.02

history and the Amir's present claims were irrelevant. But Wahab relied heavily upon both. While the India Office awaited Wahab's reports on the reasons for the 'impasse' in the Commission's work, Wahab was preoccupied with building up his case for including Shairi and other territory in the Amir's possessions. Wahab knew that that case was weak. Possibly he began his campaign against local Ottoman 'intrigues', which 'endangered' the lives of the British Commission staff, as a calculated diversion from the weakness of the British case (1). Comments on the Foreign Office file showed that Wahab's remarks did influence official opinion against the Ottomans. Wahab had written; '... Turkish conduct on border outrageous ...' because the Ottoman Commissioners had asked that British surveyors should not work inside Ottoman borders in Azraki and Mahrabi country' (2). Wahab had lodged a counter-complaint asking that

- (1) FO 78 5242. Copy of D/O, Res - Lee-Warner of 26.2.02, enclosing extracts of Wahab - Res, 22.2.02
- (2) AIA 855, Col. G. Stevens' Report, 27.9.80, reported Azraki & Ahmadi areas under Ottoman suzerainty

Ottoman Irregulars should be withdrawn from Jebel Mafari. He alleged that their introduction was a breach of the 'status quo'; he did not admit that the British had also altered the 'status quo', nor that the Mafari area was not under British influence before. The Resident supported Wahab. He commented, inaccurately, marginally: '... The Turks apparently want to justify their occupation of Shairi villages by the quibble that they do not belong to the Amiri tribe, though the Shairis were equally subject to the Amir of Dhali ...' (1).

Maitland knew that the Residency had admitted in 1884 to the Pasha in Sanaa that the Ottomans controlled the Shairis (2). But he ignored that inconvenient fact; instead, he claimed that any Ottoman presence amongst the Shairis was a breach of the Porte's undertaking in 1874 to withdraw from Dhala, which he interpreted as any of the Amir's 'territory' (3). Maitland was

(1) p.9.37 n.1

(2) FO 78 4528, FO - Musurus Pasha, 19.2.85

(3) FO 78 2755, tel. Elliot - FO, 18.6.74

committed to a strategic frontier for Aden's hinterland, not to a demarcation of the Amir's existing border, from the beginning. Maitland's private correspondence with Lee-Warner at the India Office developed so as to create hostility against the Ottomans in the Yemen. An artificial impression was given, that the Ottomans were undermining local British prestige and endangering the safety of British troops, to arouse patriotic emotions (1). In such a climate Wahab and Maitland might obtain support in Whitehall for their policy of 'grab'.

Sinister interpretations were placed on minor incidents. The Ottomans were blamed for a single shot, fired by an unknown assailant at a British surveyor (2). But the possibility is that 'the ambush' might have been 'arranged' by the Amir. An Ottoman ban on the Amir sending camels behind their lines to collect fodder was

(1) B.P., Balfour 49733. Correspondence with Curzon, 1904. Cf. Curzon - Balfour 11.12.08. '... The moment European life is held cheap in India & the prestige of the British Raj has gone ...'

(2) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 12.3.02

described as a hostile act. But, as the Aden Troop knew from past experience, the area could not provide fodder for extra horses in the summer. The Ottomans were merely conserving fodder for their own additional hundred cavalry horses (1). Plainly, the deeper purse of the British could buy up the limited local supplies through the Amir, when there was a shortage, unless the Ottomans protected their supplies; and a drought occurred in the area in 1903.

Maitland used Wahab's complaints of Ottoman hostility to justify increasing Wahab's escort by a half company of Native Infantry in 1902 (2). Possibly Maitland was unduly influenced in his approach to the boundary settlement by his personal experiences on the Russian-Afghan frontier, and by his own earlier intelligence work. He suggested that '... the Turks are playing for another 'Panjdeh Incident' which is to counterbalance the adDareja incident. I hope H.M.s

(1) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 8.2.02

(2) AIA C 29, Res - S of S, 20.3.02

Govt. are adopting a strong line of policy. If they are not I'm afraid there will be trouble ... (1).

Maitland's own lack of objectivity about affairs in Dhala was further increased by Wahab's exaggerations. Wahab was unsatisfied with the size of the reinforcement that Maitland had despatched on his own authority. Wahab asked for more troops, including some British detachments (2). Unrealistically, Wahab offered to explain to the Ottoman Commissioners that the troops were coming up to the cooler climate of Dhala 'for the summer'.

Wahab's reliance upon the Amir for local news increased Wahab's bias; thus he reported a wild rumour, that the Mutesarif of Taiz was collecting '... 900 or 1000 Arabs ...' to threaten the British Commissioners' camp, as a justification for asking for British troops. He admitted that the Amir had advised him to make the request (2). A calmer man, or one with

(1) AIA C 29, D/O Maitland - Lee-Warner, 30.3.02

(2) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 7.4.02

(3) ~~AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 7.4.02~~

more local experience, would have realised that no Ottoman official could take such action, unless the Porte wanted war with Britain. There was never any evidence to justify such an assumption. But it suited Wahab's tactics to impute the worst motives to the Ottomans. The Amir and Wahab had also an interest in destroying trust between local tribesmen and the Ottomans.

A 'secret' meeting was arranged - probably through the Amir - between the paramount Shaikh, Ali Zindani, on Jebel Jihaf and the British Commissioners' representative (1). Shaikh Ali was reluctantly persuaded to apply for British protection, on the understanding that his application would be kept secret until protection could be offered to him. But the meeting was reported to the Ottomans. Since they had appointed the Shaikh to his office, they considered his negotiations to be treasonable. The Ottomans tried, vainly, to arrest Shaikh Ali. He fled to Dhala. This breach helped Wahab and the Amir. For, having previously requested protection, secretly, as an independent

(1) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res, 3.4.02

Shaikh, Ali Zindani was now obliged to request it openly, as a client of the Amir, thus coming under the Amiri 'umbrella'. It is possible that these manoeuvres were engineered by the Amir.

Wahab admitted on his arrival at Dhala that '... the Aden Residency ... was ... quite in the dark about the frontier ...' (1). Wahab had recognised in 1892 that the Yemeni tribes in '... the more remote and inaccessible hills have little or no respect for our power, and though willing enough to accept subsidies, which are black mail [sic] , refuse unequivocally ...' to render any service in return (2). There had been virtually no contact, apart from Davies' brief visit in November 1901, since. Wahab relied on local informants such as the Amir and one Ali Mohsin Askar, who proved to be untrustworthy and uninfluential after the Border demarcation (3); he even relied upon the Amir as a

(1) AIA C 28, Wahab - Res, 29.1.02, copied to Lee-Warner by Maitland

(2) L/P&S/20 E.60, Wahab's Report on 1891/92 survey p.3

(3) AIA File No.18/1 of 1907, f 9 & f 13. Reports of Major H.F. Jacob, 2.5.06 and 18.5.06

tribal affairs adviser when the Commission moved away from the Dhala area (1). The Amir's role as Wahab's intermediary was probably financially rewarding and politically exhilarating. Bury suggested that the Amir knew how to benefit politically by arousing 'the just indignation' of British political officers (2). Even Wahab admitted that '... the Amir is always rather an anxiety to us, it is impossible to find out what he is up to, and in a moment of excitement he is capable of a great deal of mischief ...' (3). Other officers did not '... trust the Amir very far ...' (4).

Maitland was more cautious than Wahab in championing the extremer border claims; he wanted the Viceroy to support the Amir's claims to Shairi territory and to demand an Ottoman withdrawal (5). Maitland admitted that it was a new British frontier,

(1) AIA C 36, Res - Sir Louis Dane, 20.2.04

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.17

(3) AIA C 29 D/O, Wahab - Maitland, 6.5.02

(4) AIA/M/55, Major Merewether, P.O. Dhala - Res, 17.11.04

(5) AIA C 29 D/O, Maitland - W.H. Barnes, Sec.For.Dept.

13.4.02 (r) Lee-Warner D/O, 16.4.02

westward of the existing border, which the British Commissioners were pressing for. But Maitland refused '... in the existing state of affairs ...' to recommend the extension of the border westwards to include Jebel Jihaf, which was claimed by the Ottomans (1). Privately, Maitland was aware of the strategic advantage of possession of Jebel Jihaf. In suggesting that the Ottomans should receive financial or territorial compensation for withdrawing from the Shairi area, Maitland admitted that they had strong claims to the area.

Maitland asked Wahab to '... give ... detailed explanation of the reasons ... for going so much beyond the line you were prepared to accept in January, and which H.M.'s Govt. are evidently unwilling to depart from ...' (2). Wahab's detailed explanations were not received until November (3). The Amir took time,

(1) AIA C 29 D/O, Maitland - Wahab, 6.5.02

(2) AIA C 29, Res - Wahab, 10.4.02

(3) AIA C 29, Wahab - Res (r) For.Dept., 19.11.02 & p.33
AIA C 29, Res - Wahab, 10.4.02

'digging' amongst his family papers, to develop his maximum claims. Wahab rested his case upon these claims. He brushed aside Ottoman claims, and even occupation, and he established the myth of the Amir's 'right' to the strategic Shairi village, and Ottoman centre, of Jalila. That myth was eventually accepted as fact in Delhi and in Whitehall. Ultimately, the whole Shairi area was placed under the Amir, but the Shairis always denied that they were 'subjects' of the Amir.

Wahab denied Ottoman authority in the Yemen before their evacuation in 1630 as a basis for present claims; and he dismissed any Ottoman occupation from 1873 as 'aggression' on the territory of one of the nine stipendiary tribes. Having made his own rules for rejecting any Ottoman claims, Wahab encouraged the Amir to make as extensive claims as possible. The Amir's claims partly rested on Imamic documents. But Imam Muhammad Yahya admitted Sultan Abdul Hamid's suzerainty in 1905, rejecting only current corrupt Ottoman administration (1). Wahab possibly claimed more territory

(1) L/P & S/10/68 (File 57/1905), Imam - Sultan Abdul Hamid of 3.7.05, through King Edward VII, forwarded by Ag.Res - Bombay, 20.8.05

because he knew that the Porte wished to be conciliatory. He received in mid March a copy of the Secretary of State's telegram to the Foreign Department. It read; '... Grand Vizier will instruct Yemen authorities to avoid any collision with Commission. Firmness and moderation on the part of the Aden Authorities should ensure satisfactory solution ...' (1). But the Porte also anticipated a conciliatory British approach. Wahab was not conciliatory.

Lee-Warner commented coolly on Maitland's alarmist theories and on reports of Wahab's still more extreme views. A larger British escort was, in Lee-Warner's view, unnecessary. '... Delimitation will not be completedBut we don't want to seem selfish and aggressiveWe must take frontiers as we find them. We don't care what the Amirs occupy or own. What we do care about is the line at which our interest, control, or responsibility, ends ...' (2). Lee-Warner had not had the fragmented nature of the stipendiary chiefs'

(1) AIA C 29 f 257, tel SGB - Res. No date visible

(2) AIA C 29 D/0 Lee-Warner - Maitland, 23.4.02, received
5.5.02

territories explained to him. It is possible that he would have favoured abandoning the Amir to the Ottomans, if he had known. His concern was only for Aden. Maitland was unconvinced. He urged on Lee-Warner that a local right of self-determination should be accepted, giving a choice for, or against, Ottoman rule (1). Maitland obviously believed that a choice would show local anglophile sentiments. The proposal was unrealistic and unrelated to the India Office's instructions; and, if carried out, the result might have been in the Ottoman's favour (2).

Lee-Warner placed Maitland's letters on the India Office file. The Secretary of State therefore knew that Maitland and Wahab were opposed to the official India Office policy. Lord George Hamilton was concerned that the British Commissioners should not make more extensive claims than the limits of Wahab's 1891/92 survey. In particular, he was opposed to the use of

(1) AIA C 29 D/O, Maitland - Lee-Warner, 6.5.02

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.20

force to obtain such new and unauthorised objectives as a hot-weather sanitorium site or new access routes into the Yemen (1). In mentioning them, Maitland was advocating a new policy, although one later supported by the Governor of Bombay (2). The India Office did not '... wish to increase our interference or control over the tribes; and we have no intention to undertake their administration ...' (3). So far so good; but the India Office then informed the Resident that the Ottomans would be asked, if the Foreign Office agreed, to march along the limit of the 1891/92 survey workings and to withdraw any Ottoman troops east of that line (3). That would involve an Ottoman withdrawal from Jalila and some Shairi territory, because Wahab had disregarded his instructions in 1891 that his survey should cease south of the Dhala plateau. The India Office thus conceded the strategic frontier which Indian officials had supported from the beginning. The India Office

(1) AIA C 29, tel S of S - Viceroy, 7.5.02

(2) CP, Curzon - Hamilton, 4.6.03, referring to a private Memo by Lord Northcote

(3) AIA C 29, S of S - Res, tel 12.5.02

accepted that the border was only '... for international purposes to act as a barrier to foreign approach to Aden ...' (1). But, once the border was delineated, the British had to accept new international responsibilities south of it.

The Resident quickly welcomed the India Office's revised policy (2); so did the Viceroy (3). But Wahab wanted more. '... The Viceroy thoroughly understands the position and it may be possible to get him to impress on the Home people that now is the time to take up the line that is the most advantageous to us ...; but it is no good our trying to say anything to the Home Authorities ...' (4). The latter realised that Wahab was '... disposed to push British claims ... beyond the boundary as fixed by his map of 1892 ...; and they wanted no '... extension of British protectorate in conflict with our assurances to the Porte ...' (5).

(1) AIA C 29, S of S - Res, tel 12.5.02

(2) AIA C 29, D/O Maitland - Wahab, 14.5.02

(3) AIA C 29, tel Viceroy - S of S, 16.5.02

(4) AIA C 29, D/O Wahab - Res, 16.5.02

(5) AIA C 29 f 497, IO - FO, 5.5.02

However, Maitland provoked the India Office to move further by alleging that '...the Turks...seized almost every important position as soon as our Commission appeared at Dthali...' (1). This statement was passed to the Foreign Office with the comment that it was so serious as to make '...all joint delimitation impossible ...' (1). Hamilton wanted O'Conor⁽³⁾ '...to speak plainly to the Turkish Government... and request ... the withdrawal of their troops ...' (1).

O'Conor spoke forcefully and threateningly; there was no suggestion of conciliation or negotiations. Britain did '... not recognise the Turkish occupation of Jelale [sic Jalila] , and if the Military Commandant [at Qataba] should be encouraged in his present intransigent attitude [i.e. defending Ottoman interests against inroads by the Amir and the British (2)]... a satisfactory settlement of the frontier question will be difficult without its entailing unpleasant

(1) AIA C 29, IO - FO, 13.5.02, quoting tel Res - S of S, 13.5.02

(2) E.g. p.9.40 n.2

(3) H.B.M. Ambassador to the Porte.

consequences sooner or later for the Turks ...' (1). Unlike the India Office, the Foreign Office did not receive copies of Maitland's later demi-official letters to Lee-Warner with their expansionist views. Lee-Warner considered them too 'confusing' to pass on to the Foreign Office (2). So the Foreign Office and O'Connor lacked this means of assessing the credibility of Ottoman replies to the Resident's charges. But O'Connor did know that the Ottoman position in the Yemen was very weak. Revolt had broken out; '... the Sultan will not be so foolish as to risk disagreement with us in regard to Aden frontier (3)....'

Once the Home Government had included the Shairi area within the new British border claims, Maitland sought an extension further westwards. He had rejected that before as unrealistic (4). Now

- (1) L/P & S/10/63. Aden Frontier Delimitation Pt. I 1905-37. FO - IO, 10.6.02 forwarded HBMA , C'ple - FO, 4.6.02
- (2) L/P & S/10/63. Note by Lee-Warner on Maitland's D/O letter of 22.5.02, rec'd 6.6.02
- (3) AIA C 29, tel O'Connor - FO, 14.5.02
- (4) AIA C 29, D/O Maitland - Wahab, 6.5.02

Maitland urged privately that the new border would be '... disastrous. The Amir will probably go over to the Turks and that would put us in a very embarrassing position ...' (1). Curzon, too, urged Hamilton to adopt a more 'resolute' policy; '... the result of our extreme civility [sic] ... and of our failure to support our men with a sufficient show of troops, has been that the Turks are now in tranquil occupation of a considerable strip of country on the inner or British side of the frontier ...' (2). Curzon declared that the Ottomans would either '... have to retire, or we shall have to turn them out. They have throughout taken advantage of our good nature and simplicity ...'. Curzon then criticised the clumsy handling of the Commission's affairs by the poorly co-ordinated actions of the India Office, the Governments of India and of Bombay and of the Resident at Aden. '... We are all more or less at cross-purposes with each other, and when the

(1) AIA C 29, D/O Maitland - Sir H. Barnes, Sec.For.Dept. 1.6.02

(2) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 21.5.02, rec'd 9.6.02

telegrams come, reporting someone else's telegram, and criticising someone else's advice, all the parties concerned being simultaneously at work in independence of each other, it is almost impossible to understand ... or to make head or tail of the entire concern In the present absurd position, ... nobody knows whose orders are being executed, or what is actually taking place ...' (1). Curzon suggested that the Government of India should issue orders to the Boundary Commissioners, in consultation with the India Office.

Curzon's suggestion was not adopted; the India Office continued to send occasional telegrams direct to the Resident, and to receive telegrams from the Commissioners and the Resident. The Government of India still passed its instructions through the Government of Bombay. But, if the forward policy that was followed already went beyond Curzon's original requirements, - possibly without his full realisation - it was Curzon who pressed it on Hamilton. The latter secured the

(1) p.9.53 n.2

British Government's acquiescence. In Sir Walter Lawrence's view; '... The real business of the Government of India was transacted in the private letters ... between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State ...' (1); and Lawrence could hardly remember one instance where the India Office overruled Curzon. In Sir Arthur Godley's view, in retrospect, it was Curzon's policy on the Aden Boundary Commission that was followed, not the Cabinet's or the India Office's (2), from the summer of 1902.

Curzon claimed that '... no one in India has the slightest desire to extend the Aden boundary or to adopt a policy of expansion (3). We are merely standing up against what we regard [sic] as intolerable pretensions on the part of the Turks ...'. Curzon claimed that there was a significant unity of outlook between all the Indian officials concerned with the frontier demarcation (3). The British Commissioners,

(1) Lawrence 'India' p.268

(2) MP, M999, Very Private PS, Godley - Minto, 29.6.06

(3) CP, Curzon - Hamilton, 28.5.02

Aden, Bombay and the Foreign Department were in agreement that the India and Foreign Offices' conception of a suitable frontier was disastrously unrealistic, But that was really the limit of their agreement. The closer officials were to the frontier the more expansionist they became.

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Curzon warned Hamilton, late in June, that any continuation of the same cautious reliance on diplomacy, and on '... a wholly impractical line of boundary ...' (1) previously offered to the Porte, would produce no delimitation. Frontiers could not be drawn up by a committee looking at a map in Downing Street. But, because that had been done, Hamilton and the India Office were at loggerheads with the whole of their Indian advisers ...' (1). Curzon was insistent that the Ottomans must evacuate Jalila, and the fertile Shairi area. Curzon urged Hamilton to '... leave a

(1) CP, Curzon - Hamilton, 25.6.02

good deal to the men on the spot ...' even at this eleventh hour. Failure would be '... wholly due to mismanagement at home ...' (1). A week later Curzon wrote; '... If our position in the neighbourhood of Aden is to depend upon our relations with the Turks, and if these are to be controlled by the Foreign Office in entire independence of ourselves ... I see no advantage of Aden remaining under India ...' (2).

Curzon made his bitterness plain to the Permanent Secretary; '... You have reduced our local officers to despair, Bombay to indignation and the Govt. of India to righteous fury, and you will either have to give way or you will sacrifice the whole position ... Had I tried my best or worst I could not have made the infernal muddle ... that has been made at home ...' (3). Curzon was an expert on India and he did not intend to continue to be treated as he had so far been; '... some more docile victim will be required ...'. Probably,

(1) p.9.56 n.1

(2) Q, Curzon - Hamilton, 2.7.02

(3) KP, Curzon - Godley, 18.6.02

demi-official letters from Wahab, and from Maitland, to the Secretary at the Foreign Department, enabled Curzon to appreciate that officers in Aden felt that they were not being adequately supported.

Early in June, Hamilton had already accepted the desirability for a change in the proposed frontier; he spent two to three hours on 4th June going '... through the maps, documents and correspondence of that tiresome Aden delimitation ...' (1). That was before he received Curzon's critical letter of 21st May (2). Hamilton then arranged for a joint India Office - Foreign Office Committee to consider whether a more favourable frontier could be demanded. The Committee considered that there was no justification for resiling on earlier British undertakings to the Porte. Hamilton accepted that view (3). But, he wrote; '... O'Connor will soon be here. I will go carefully through the case with him. If we can escape in good faith from the line of frontier

(1) Lord HP, Hamilton - Curzon, 5.6.02

(2) p.9.53 n.2

(3) Lord HP, Hamilton - Curzon. No date, July '02, answering one of Curzon's letters of June '02

you deprecate I will gladly do so ...'. Hamilton thought he realised '... how the difference between us has arisen The Amiris have advanced ... Wahab naively remarks ... that the 'situation had materially changed in favour of the Amiris since 1891-92' (1) ... But, if we depart from the frontier we have always adhered to, we shall justly be accused by the Turks of a breach of faith ... I will look closely into the matter, and see if we can hit upon any compromise by which we can establish a frontier, which, without giving annoyance to our allies, will be respected by the Turks ...' (2). The Foreign Office were bound by past discussions with the Porte on the frontier. Therefore, '... it was impossible to allow any instructions ..., inconsistent with or over-rid[ing] the assurances they had given to the Turk, and by which the Porte was induced to agree to a joint delimitation ...' (1). Hamilton was doing his best to appease Curzon and his Indian officials

(1) Actually, Wahab was claiming non 'Amiri' areas as being under the Amir

(2) LHM CP, Hamilton - Curzon, 10.7.02

without breaking faith with the Porte.

O'Connor's attitude was helpful for Hamilton; O'Connor, wrongly, accepted that the Ottomans had indulged in dangerous brinkmanship since the British Commissioner arrived at Dhala (1). He accepted Wahab's reports at face-value, and, most notably, Wahab's claims that the neighbouring tribes were 'Amiri'. As a result, '... O'Connor saw no objection, so far as he personally was concerned, to informing the Turks that, by the action they had taken, they had so upset the proposal that we had made to them, that we withdrew from it ...'. Cynically, it was safe, and convenient, to browbeat the Ottomans over the Yemen. The way was now open to support the 'men on the spot' as Curzon wanted.

The voice of moderation, and of experience, was still raised by Lee-Warner. Possibly Lee-Warner was realistic because he hoped to be made Governor of Bombay, in succession to Lord Northcote (2). Curzon had suggested his appointment before Lord Northcote was

(1) Lord HP, Hamilton - Curzon, 17.7.02, describing meeting Hamilton, Godley, O'Connor at IO

(2) LW, Lee-Warner - Godley, 23.7.02

appointed (1). Maitland, however, was due for leave; and he was allowed to come and put the local case for wider Amiri borders in person at London. Hamilton considered Maitland's demands (2) '... too pretentious ...' and doubted whether '... except by something little short of war, or a declaration of war ..., the Turks would take ...' Maitland's proposed frontier (3). But, through ignorance of local conditions, Hamilton rashly proposed that '... meantime, the delimitation can go to the east of the plateau ...', while Maitland's proposals were being studied (4). That eastern area was rugged, unpenetrated, country, with a people who were fiercely independent of both the Ottomans and of the British (5).

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Maitland's Memorandum was extremely prejudiced

- (1) LW, Sir Walter Lawrence - Lee-Warner, 16.11.99
- (2) IOL, Maitland's unnumbered memo of 28.7.02, written at IO
- (3) CP, Hamilton - Curzon, 7.8.02
- (4) CP, Hamilton - Curzon, 31.7.02
- (5) p.9.72 n.3

in favour of the Amir; it was based on selective references to past history, and decidedly alarmist as to future developments, if Maitland's proposals were rejected. Such veiled blackmail was effective by 'a local expert' facing officials with no other source of current information and many other commitments. Maitland denied that any Ottoman claims existed outside the Jalila enclave (1), which he admitted had been Ottoman territory since 1873. The Ottomans had '... no maps, ... [had] produced no documents of any value ... and they appear to rely on the ... pretensions of the Sultan to the whole of Arabia ...' (2). By contrast, Maitland brazenly claimed that '... the Amir is in possession of deeds showing ancient possession by his ancestors of the territories which he now rules [sic] , and has documentary evidence, such as revenue accounts of recent administration ...'. The absurdity of these claims on behalf of the Amir were exposed in 1904, when the Amir

(1) The villages of Jalila, Lakhmat al Hajjar, Jalas & alWabh

(2) p.9.61 n.2, para 38 of Memo

had only 15 'soldiers' and the neighbouring Amiri tribes were effectively rejecting his new-found pretensions to rule them (1). But that was in the future. In July, Maitland wrote; '... Amir Shaif has ... acted with great moderation and forbearance ... at the high-handed proceedings of the Turks in his dominions ...'. Maitland warned that the Amir might '... endeavour to assert his rights by force (which at the present time he might be able to do) against ... the Turks ...' (2).

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Hamilton and the Foreign Office gave British requirements in the Yemen a low priority beside the other areas of joint Anglo-Ottoman interest. In particular, Hamilton did not wish to alienate the Porte so that a joint Ottoman, Russian, French and German front developed in the Persian Gulf against Britain (3).

(1) AIA M44, Memo on Amir's annual visit, 7.11.04

(2) p.9.61. n.2, para 42 of Memo

(3) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 3.8.02

Curzon had other ideas. He would '... land troops at Aden, ... march them up to Dhali, and ... give the Turkish Commission full warning that, unless they come to terms by a certain date, [he] would occupy all the villages in dispute. If they resisted, [Curzon] would drive them out ...'. Curzon proposed that a satisfactory frontier should be imposed and held by force if the Ottomans would not 'negotiate'. Such a policy required '... resolution at the Foreign Office and troops in Aden ...' (1). Curzon was prepared to provide the (Indian) troops. At the end of August, Curzon claimed that Wahab's reports showed '... how entirely false the Turks are playingUntil His Majesty's Government begin to threaten no progress will be made ...' (2). But O'Connor had threatened the Porte in June (3).

Curzon's patience was to be strained still more.

'... If we do not exercise our undisputed Protectorate

(1) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 3.8.02

(2) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 27.8.02

(3) L/P&S/10/63, Aden Frontier Delimitation Pt 1, 1905-37
FO - IO, 10.6.02, forwarded HBMA & C'ple - FO, 4.6.02

along the entire South Arabian coast from Aden to Muscat, some foreign Power will appear ... and stick its head into any vacant opening ...' (1). The Ottoman Commissioners would certainly not have accepted that a British Protectorate existed, particularly one which included all Hadhramaut. Curzon objected strongly to Lord Lansdowne's exclusion of Hadhramaut from such a Protectorate (1). In Dhala, Wahab was negotiating with Yafai clans to move British claims northwards towards the Aulagis and the desert, and so to block Ottoman expansion inland to Hadhramaut (2). Maitland was negotiating separately in Aden. The British were thus intriguing with Yafai tribes who had prior connections with the Ottomans. In 1895 even the Lower Yafais had been admitted to be outside British influence (3).

Hamilton's proposal (4), that the border should meantime be delimited to the east of the Dhala plateau,

(1) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 17.9.02

(2) BSC 1900/02, Wahab's diary 1-14 August. Off.Resident
- S of S, 8.8.02 & 18.8.02

(3) AIA/C IO of 99/100 Note on Ag SGB's letter of 12.2.95

(4) p.9.61 n.4

was passed to, and accepted by, the Porte. It was agreed that the border should be delimited north-east towards the desert. O'Connor commented, '... I can understand the objections of the [Ottoman] Commissioners who are on the spot, and know the geography of the country and the importance to us of the delimitation towards the Rub alKhali desert, but, fortunately, the Ottoman declarations ... are too precise and recent to admit of any back-sliding ... If I hear that there is an inclination at the Porte to support the views of the Ottoman delegates that the Yafai (1) area was not one of the Nine Cantons, I will submit to Your Lordship, by telegraph, the necessity of instructing Colonel Wahab to get into communication ... with the Yaffai Headman ... to counter these intrigues ...' (2).

The Ottoman Commissioners had rejected, in September (3), that the Upper Yafais and Aulagis were

- (1) Possibly the intended reference was to Lower Yafai, rather than Upper Yafai
- (2) AIA C 31, O'Connor - FO, 10.9.02, forwarded SGB - Res, 7.11.02
- (3) BSC 1900/02, Res - S of S, 3.10.02, forwarding Wahab's report of 25.2.99

included amongst the nine stipendiary tribes. Since no British stipends were paid to them, the Ottomans were correct; but both names had been included with those of stipendiary tribes by the British in 1873, to cover the Lower Yafais and Lower Aulaqis. Instead, the Ottomans listed the Umerah (1) and the Zaida (2). That, Wahab warned, indicated an Ottoman intention to limit British influence to the Fadhli area on the east, and to exclude the rest, including Hadhramaut. Curzon, however, had already noted a stiffening of the British attitude by October; he believed that '... the threat of moving troops may be sufficient ...' to dislodge the Ottomans from the Dhala neighbourhood (3). He deplored '... the extraordinary [British] weakness ...'. On 26th October Curzon wrote firmly; '... Please get out your Aitchison ... The Protectorate exists ...' (4). Curzon intended to keep the 'status quo' as

(1) Probably from Khor al Umeira

(2) The Abdali area acquired from the Haushabis in 1868

(3) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 15.10.02

(4) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton

he interpreted it, despite Lord Lansdowne's objections to including the Upper, Yafai and Aulaqi, areas.

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O'Connor found that the Porte reacted quickly to naval pressure, applied at Hodaida by the visit of H.M.S. 'Harrier', to encourage the settlement of Ottoman debts due to British Indian residents there. In answer to hopes for 'Harrier's' early departure, O'Connor threatened the Foreign Minister, '... that if this Aden question were not settled promptly it was ... likely that two other ships would be sent ...' (1). Probably naval pressure and O'Connor's plain speaking influenced the Porte and the Sultan. The Ottoman Commissioners reported that they '... had received orders to cooperate in defining boundary to north-east and in arranging evacuation from Jebel Jehaf, Jebel Mafari, Lakmat As Saleh and Suhaf ...' (2) as a gesture of good-

(1) AIA C 31, tel O'Connor - FO, 31.10.02

(2) AIA C 31, Wahab - For.Dept., 8.11.02, reporting meeting of 7.11.02

will. The Ottomans made no mention of evacuating Jalila. Both the villages they named were small, outlying, ungarrisoned, villages. In addition, the Mausetta and Dhubi areas were claimed as parts of the Ottoman Rada district, and the Shaibi area as belonging to the neighbouring Muresi area. The Ottoman evacuation of the Mafari area had limited value since the senior Ottoman Commissioner had recently negotiated with the Mafari and Ahmadi Shaikhs for a new local basis for Ottoman control in the area (1).

November 1902 was later considered to mark a turning point; '... Lord Curzon's policy had borne fruit, as ... the Turkish troops had been withdrawn from the posts which they had occupied, with the exception of Jalila ...' (2). That withdrawal might have destroyed the illusion, fostered by Wahab and Maitland, that local sympathies were pro-British. The Grand Vizier pointed out that one shot fired at the

(1) AIA C 31, Wahab - pol.diary entry for Nov.3.1902

(2) MP, M827, Foreign Dept. Report, Jan 1899 - Apr. 1904, page 6

British Commissioners' camp should not be blamed on what the British called 'Arab Levies' of the Ottomans. They were '... simply native Arabs who are apparently opposed to the delimitation ...' (1). As the Ottomans had evacuated the area at British request they could no longer control the tribesmen (1). It is possible that such incidents were engineered by the Amir, to maintain Anglo-Ottoman ill-feeling and British support for his claims. Maitland described the Ottoman Commissioners' aims as being '... to lower their British colleagues in the sight of the Arabs in every way practical ...' (2).

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The Resident had reacted vigorously to the Ottoman claim that the Yafais and Aulaqis were not under British protection (3). Maitland now believed

(1) AIA C 31, O'Connor - FO, 3.12.02, quoting Vizier

(2) BSC 1900/02, Res - SGB (r) S of S, 6.12.02

(3) AIA C 31, Res - For.Dept. (r) SGB, 11.11.02

that official opinion in London considered a demarcation unlikely. He therefore suggested that the Porte should be warned that the Amir would 'resume his administration' in Ottoman-occupied areas and that a British force should then support the Amir. The India Office vetoed the Government of India's proposal to implement the Resident's idea, and required an Anglo-Ottoman settlement before the Amir could occupy Ottoman-evacuated territory (1). Maitland had also proposed that British intentions should be emphasized by the return of HMS 'Harrier' to Hodaïda, by the mobilisation of the Aden Column and by the precautionary purchase of 1000 baggage camels (2). Mistakenly, Maitland suggested that the camels would be equally suitable for Somali coastal operations if not required for Dhala. Maitland believed that '... actual collision appears ... unlikely ...' (2). Wahab had arrived at a rather similar conclusion. His escort ought to be reinforced and supporting troops should move half-way up to Museimir, where water and forage were

(1) AIA C 31, IO - FO & FO - IO, 4.12 & 6.12.02

(2) AIA C 31, tel Res - SGB (r) S of S, 12.11.02

plentiful (1). Wahab favoured a forward move of his British camp to the Yafai border as '... a clear proof to the Arab tribes that the Turks have been compelled to yield ...', as an opportunity for reconnoitering unfamiliar country, and to test Yafai reactions.

Wahab's position was difficult; he had claimed to find strong tribal support for a British connection, but now that he was authorised (2) to proceed to the north-east he probably knew that it was impossible. It was not Ottoman intrigues which barred Wahab's way; it was the suspicious xenophobia of the hill tribes.

'... It would be as well to point out to H.M. Government that the difficulties before us ... [to] the north-east ... will depend at least as much on the attitude of the Arabs as on that of the Turks; ... their resentment or even dissatisfaction [at British moves] will make our task impossible ...' (3). A passage could not be forced through the Yafai area, because of the difficult terrain

(1) AIA C 31, Wahab - Res, 12.11.02, rec'd Aden 14.11.02

(2) AIA C 31, S of S - Viceroy, 25.11.02

(3) AIA C 31, Wahab - Maitland, 16.11.02, rec'd 18.11.02

and the nature of the people and their weapons. Wahab knew that it was not intended to make new treaties with the Yafais for the present; but he wished to be able to promise such treaties in future. He would therefore have to depend upon buying tribal friendship, if he was to be able to survey to the north-east. Such a short-term policy would be in conflict with any Resident's long-term requirement of a stable connection with the tribesmen. Maitland believed that Rs 10,000 would be required to buy the British Commissioners' passage, once the Ottomans evacuated Jalila (1). Later, Maitland opposed bribing the Yafais to receive the Commission.

Wahab's earlier claims of Yafai support for the British were not immediately tested, because the Ottoman Commissioners refused to demarcate to the north-east (2). Eight days earlier, Wahab had reported that his Ottoman colleagues admitted that they were under orders to do so (3).

(1) AIA C 31, tel Res - S of S, 20.12.02

(2) AIA C 31, Wahab - Res, 15.11.02

(3) AIA C 31, Wahab - For.Dept., 8.11.02, reporting meeting of 7.11.02

Now, he claimed that they continued to regard the Yafai area, including the Shaibi clan, as Ottoman territory; and that they proposed instead to demarcate south-east down the Bana river to the eastern Fadhli border.

'... While Turks maintain this [claim to Yafais and Aulaqis] no starting point can be found for further demarcation ...' (1). No progress could be made but no embarrassing Yemeni hostility would be aroused, and the reliability of Wahab's assessments and the practicality of his proposals, would not be called into question. The Resident relayed Wahab's conclusion to London and to Delhi. Stalemate ensued, during the most favourable working season of the year.

The demarcation appeared to have no prospects of success. Doubts were expressed about Wahab's ability to negotiate with the Ottomans (2). A dragoman from the British Embassy at Constantinople, Gerald Fitzmaurice, was, therefore, sent to the Yemen to conduct negotiations with the Ottomans. He arrived on 26th November (3).

(1) p.9.73 n.2

(2) AIA C 31, S of S - Viceroy, 25.11.02

(3) AIA 1368 f 640, Major Tod - Capt. Pottinger, undated

Wahab was to remain the senior British Commissioner, but Fitzmaurice was allowed to communicate informally with O'Connor in Constantinople, although not officially with the Foreign Office, so that Wahab's position as head of the Commission would not be challenged.

Fitzmaurice's licence to write, or wire, to O'Connor, but not to repeat his correspondence to the Foreign Office, ensured for the British Commissioners a 'private line' with O'Connor, unsupervised by the Foreign Office or by the Government of India. This was to be of very great value to Fitzmaurice and Wahab; the significance of such a link had not been foreseen, and it does not appear to have been appreciated during the Commission's existence. Fitzmaurice accepted Wahab's assessment of the situation (1).

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Wahab submitted a Memorandum on the Amir's extensive claims in the Dhala area, and on the Ottoman

(1) AIA C 31, Fitzmaurice - O'Connor, 2.12.02 (badly wormeaten)

comments rejecting the Amir's claims, (1). This was forwarded by the Resident to London on 2nd December (2). These papers 'proved' the British case, if Wahab's integrity and impartiality were not questioned. Official opinion in the India Office now accepted that a case existed, and that Ottoman officials had been obstructive and deceitful. Wahab's judgement was not questioned. Locally, a more realistic view prevailed; '... A scrutiny of these various claims [of the Amir] was judiciously omitted by our Commissioners as irrelevant to the broad issues before them ...' (3). Wahab alleged that the Amir's territory extended from Wadi Tiban on the west to Wadi Bana on the east, and from Wadi Qataba on the north to Wadi Sahebiya in the south. An obvious weakness of these claims, observed by Maitland (4), was that, in arid areas, river valleys do not form natural boundaries. The population

(1) AIA C 32, Wahab - Maitland. The date may be 16th or 18th Nov

(2) BSC 1900/02, Res - S of S, 2.12.02

(3) Jacob 'Kingsa' p.81

(4) AIA C 32, Res - Wahab, 22.11.02

concentrates in such areas. Wahab even proposed to divide the Dakkam tribal area along the Wadi Tiban, as neither the Ottomans nor the Amir had more than a '... vague and insubstantial claim ...' (1). Maitland criticised the inclusion of the Dakkam; '... this is the first time that we have heard anything of the Dukkam ...' (2). Ultimately, the whole Dakkam area was placed within British limits.

The Amir claimed that some tribal territory had been 'purchased' and that there were tribal agreements to pay the Amir tax. These agreements were signed between A.H. 1276 (1859) and A.H. 1319 (1902). They concerned the western areas of Jebel Jihaf, with a number of small tribal sections, and the Mafari, Ahmadi and Humedi areas (3). None of these areas had been reported as paying the Amir tax before (4).

(1) AIA C 32, Wahab - Maitland. The date may be 18th Nov.

(2) AIA C 32, Res - Wahab, 22.11.02

(3) AIA C 28, f 415-420 in Wahab Memo I forwarded to Res, 12.2.02

(4) AIA C 28, Res - SGB, forwarding a petition for protection, 1.12.01

A typical case was that of the Mafari tribal lands; the Amir's documents were alleged to prove their sale in September 1862, (Rabia Awal A.H. 1279) and in 1874. The first sale was for MT\$ 2500; the later one was for MT\$ 380. It was customary, partly to circumvent the Koranic veto on usury, to make a fictitious sale, when arranging a loan. Reference to contemporary records show that the Mafaris might have required a loan at both periods. 1862 was an unsettled year in the Yemen; the people of Sanaa deposed the Imam and elected in his place one temporal, and another spiritual, leader. 1863-64 was marked by cattle disease in Aden's neighbourhood; it had spread from the interior (1). Possibly, the disease was present amongst the Mafari in 1862. In Aden, '... very few animals were spared and the people were reduced to sore distress ...'. The further 'sale' in 1874 might also be explained by cattle-disease and '... near-famine conditions in the

(1) Hunter 'Aden' p.178

Yemen ...' (1). The discrepancy in the two 'sale' prices of the two 'halves' of Mafari territory makes a genuine sale still less plausible.

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Wahab's unconciliatory approach towards the Ottomans is illustrated by a letter he wrote to Maitland when the latter was on a duty visit to India (2).

'... The only way to get anything satisfactory out of the Turks is to make the consequences of their attitude as unpleasant to them as we can - in fact to show them that we are determined to enforce our just [sic] claims, and make them bow to necessity ...' (2). Wahab had

(1) PRO FO 78 3188, Consul General Stanton in Egypt - FO, 17.3.75, remarking that Yemen conditions inconvenienced Aden more than the Egyptian closure of Bulhar roadstead

(2) AIA C 31 D/O, Wahab - Maitland, 12.12.02, received in India 26.12.

probably learnt from Fitzmaurice that the Ottoman
 '... claim to sovereignty [over all Arabia] is one
 that neither the Sultan nor any Turkish official will
 ever renounce ...' (1). Wahab insisted that '... the
 Government at home must make up its mind on the facts as
 stated by us (2). It is no use referring them to
 Constantinople ...' (1). Maitland was interviewed by
 Curzon about the demarcation early in January. Curzon
 was '... sick at the feeble bluster of the Turks, the
 lying of the Porte, the vacillation of our diplomacy,
 and the humbug of the whole affair ...' (3). Maitland's
 visit and Wahab's later reports could only have
 strengthened Curzon's disillusionment. Curzon was
 bluntly critical of '... British tactics ... better
 fitting a Power like Siam or Belgium than the foremost
 Empire of the world ...' (3). As a result of Maitland's
 interview in Delhi Curzon began to doubt Wahab's

(1) p.9.79 n.2

(2) Possibly referring to the official Indian acceptance
 of his agreements. See 9.69 n.2

(3) C.P, Curzon - Hamilton, 18.12.02

suitability. Maitland had described Wahab as '... rather over-anxious and wanting in consistency and decision ...'

(1). But Curzon recognised that '... under [such strain] as Wahab's ... the temper or the courage of any ordinary man might be expected to break down ...' (1).

Curzon had, also, no liking for Maitland (2).

A typed Memorandum on Aden sent to the Prime Minister, probably in January, blackguarded Ottoman action in the Yemen. '... The Turkish Commissioners ... have ... adopted an impractical and obstructive attitude, ... occupied districts hitherto [sic] under the Amir's jurisdiction ..., forcibly displacing his agents and substituting their own nominees. Repeated assurances ... from the [Ottoman] Sultan ... that the troops and irregular lines would be withdrawn ... received no execution ...' (3). So Britain had been obliged to warn the Porte that they would consider how to protect '... the tribes with whom we are in treaty

(1) C.P, Curzon - Hamilton, 5.3.03

(2) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 29.7.03

(3) B.P, 49747. Undated Memo of c. January 1903

relations ...'. Lord Lansdowne noted to Balfour about the situation; '... the only question ... still to require consideration is whether other forms of pressure ought not to be put on the Porte in addition to the threat of turning out by force their troops from the territory claimed by us ...' (1). Another official view in London was, however, that Curzon underestimated Britain's need to keep on good terms with all the Great Powers (2). India was '... sheltered from external dangers by British power ...'. Hamilton was surprised that Maitland required (3) another Brigade in Aden and was reluctant to agree that the need existed (4). Britain was already committed to a blockade off Venezuela, to operations in Somaliland, and to smaller operations in Nigeria (4). The Foreign Office, and O'Connor, objected to an open rupture with the Porte. The Foreign Office were '... anxious not to perturb

(1) B.P, 49728, Lansdowne - Balfour, 9.1.03

(2) C.P, Hamilton - Curzon, 6.1.03

(3) AIA C 31, tel Res - S of S (r) SGB 11.1.03

(4) C.P, Hamilton - Curzon, 14.1.03

international opinion by a transaction in which we shall be represented as grabbing what does not belong to us ...' (1). But the Cabinet did agree to a threat of naval action to prevent 10,000 Ottoman troops, due for garrison reliefs, being landed at Hodaida (1).

'... The Prime Minister and Lord Lansdowne agree[d] as to the necessity of our securing the friendship of the Upper Yafai Sahikhs, but until the facts concerning the limits of tribal territory ... [were] ascertained ... they [were] unwilling to be committed further than is necessary ...' (2). It was desirable that the Resident should attempt to gain Yafai support by money payments, but, if bribery failed, '... a Treaty of friendship and peace, combined with a stipend ...' might be concluded by the Resident (2). A note of caution was struck by a marginal comment on the Acting Resident's alarmist letter on Yafai affairs of 4th January, 1903 (3). 'We clearly want more knowledge.

(1) C.P., Hamilton - Curzon, 5.2.02

(2) AIA C 31, S of S - Viceroy, 9.1.03

(3) LA, 1903, Lt. Col. J.S. Ashby to Sec.Pol. & Secret Dept., 10, 4.1.03

The Yaffai are evidently a doubtful, strong, undesirable lot for a protectorate and too far from Aden and the coast generally to make it worth our while troubling about them.' (1).

The Acting Resident argued that only a Protectorate agreement would reassure the tribes and make a survey possible along the Yafai border. He injected a note of urgency by a telegram requesting instructions on the possibility of a Yafai treaty. The Yafai chiefs were due to visit the Commissioners at Dhala in a week or ten days for discussions (2). The Acting Resident warned that the '... Yaffai might definitely throw in their lot with the Turks as a result of our refusing to concede their demands ...' (2). On his return from India the Resident maintained the pressure. In telegrams of 14th and 15th January Maitland argued that failure to agree to a Protectorate treaty with the Upper Yafai would be taken locally as a British admission of

(1) Initialedlled HAH

(2) LA, 1903, tel Ag.Res - S of S, 4.1.03

Ottoman rights in the area (1). The Upper Yafais would then turn to the Ottomans, with adverse effects on the Lower Yafai and even in the Dhala area, which had Yafai immigrants. The Aulaqis and Beihanis would be adversely affected and Hadhramaut might be opened to Ottoman influence overland (1). Lee-Warner noted on the Resident's telegram of the 14th that he had already asked the Government of India to justify including the Upper Yafai within the British Protectorate (2).

Lee-Warner strongly opposed any new treaty;

'... We are to undertake responsibility, which we have hitherto deliberately avoided, and which we cannot fulfil without additional troops at Aden because:-

- i) Our prestige requires it. Surely our prestige will suffer if we accept a responsibility which we cannot fulfil.
- ii) non-interference will look like weakness.
I answer interference will create weakness.

(1) AIA C 31, tels Res - S of S

(2) LA 1903, Note by Lee-Warner

- iii) absence of a treaty will limit our powers of interference. For that we may be thankful.
- iv) a treaty will give us powers of pressure. But the question is whether we want to use pressure.

These seem weak reasons for reversing a policy which has preserved peace around Aden for 30 years or more.' (1).

Lee-Warner was warmly supported by another shrewd minute. The writer ended; '... As to the loss of prestige [in letting the Ottomans have the Upper Yafai], once you begin to play a game of "grab", there is some little loss of prestige in letting anything go, even if you find it wd. be an absolute encumbrance ... to have it; but this is apt to be exaggerated by local officers, actually engaged in the game ...' (2).

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(1) LA 1903, Note by Lee Warner of 19.1.03

(2) LA 1903, Initials not clear, 20.1.03

In Constantinople, O'Connor claimed that the Grand Vizier accepted that the Yafai (1) tribes were in the British sphere of influence; but that the Minister of War was making every possible effort to extricate himself from the Porte's undertaking to demarcate north-eastwards to the desert from Dhala (2). However, the British Cabinet (3) was agreed that any Ottoman opposition should be swept aside. '... When the proper moment arrives, O'Connor will be instructed to inform the Porte that if instructions ... are not sent [to] , and are not obeyed by, the Turkish Commission, the British Commission will proceed by itself to ascertain the boundaries [to the north-east] , and that any attempt to interfere with their line of communications will be summarily dealt with; and ... force will be used to expel Turkish troops or Arab

- (1) A valid distinction could be drawn between the Upper and Lower Yafai tribes. The Lower Yafai Sultan had no control over Upper Yafai. Cf.

Belhaven 'Uneven Road' p.152 and Bury 'Uz' p.28

- (2) AIA C 31, O'Connor - FO, 5.1.03

- (3) p.9.81 n.3 and p.9.82. n.1

levies from Amiri territory, ... or if the Turks or their Arab levies molest the British troops in any way Please let me know ... whether our troops at Dhali are of sufficient strength with reinforcements available from Aden to carry out quickly and effectively the expulsion of Turks from the Amiri territory.' (1).

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Wahab and Maitland now faced some prospect of fighting Yemenis in the border area; Wahab knew how exposed his position would be if the British and the Ottoman Commissioners were no longer in friendly contact (2). For, despite deliberately alarmist telegrams, the Commissioners' social relations were good. Wahab therefore made out a case for needing more troops, stating that the Ottomans had increased their strength in anticipation of the arrival of British reinforcements. '... Turkish force ... [near] Dthali

(1) LA 1903. Tel S of S - Viceroy (r) Resident, 9.1.03

(2) E.g. LA, Wahab's diary entry of 1.1.03. Entertaining Ottoman Commissioners to celebrate the Coronation.

considerably superior to ours, especially in guns, ... 8 modern breech loading guns to our 4 obsolete seven pounders ...' (1). Maitland also relayed Wahab's reports that the Ottomans were raising 600 Arab auxiliaries for duty in the disputed area and had '... increased strength at Jaleela in territory not admittedly Turkish ...' (1). This last information implied that the Ottomans did not intend to evacuate Jalila. It is possible that the increase in Ottoman troops was due rather to the growing danger from the Iman's revolt, to a wish to maintain Ottoman prestige beside an enlarged British escort, or to the need for a stronger escort if a joint survey was to be attempted along the dangerous Yafai border. Wahab's and Maitland's reports maintained official British and Indian suspicion of Ottoman intentions and made a negotiated settlement less likely. Curzon remained critical of the India Office and of the Foreign Office over the Aden boundary, the Persian Gulf, Kuwait, Muscat, Afghanistan, Chinese

(1) LA 1903, tel Res - SGB (r) S of S, 14.1.03

Turkestan, Tibet, Yunnan and Siam (1).

Four hundred men and four guns were sent to Dhala in January, 1903 (2); and further reinforcements followed, until, by May, British strength in Dhala and on the lines of communication reached 1500 men. In order to be able to prevent the arrival of Ottoman reinforcements at Hodaida, H.M.S. 'Hermione' and 'Intrepid' were sent to Aden from the Mediterranean (3). The Ottoman situation in the Yemen was grave; but the Porte was warned by O'Connor not to send troops to the Yemen, because a British naval blockade would be enforced (4). The Porte therefore conceded most of the British demands in Dhala by mid February (5).

The Senior Ottoman Commissioner announced that he had been ordered to disband Arab Levies in the disputed areas; to recognise the Amir's administration

(1) KP, Curzon - Godley, 22.1.03

(2) p.9.89 n.1

(3) LA, tel Res - Sec.For.Dept. (r) S of S, 23.2.03

(4) p.9.83 n.1

(5) LA, Wahab's diary entry of 15.2.03

as it was when the Joint Commission began; (1) to recognise the Yafai area as one of the stipendiary areas; and to arrange for the frontier delimitation north-eastwards towards the desert. But '... to leave for decision between the two Governments points on which the Commissioners on both sides cannot agree ...' (2). Possession of Jalila and the Shairi area was one such point of disagreement. The Shairi area was, however, accepted by the Ottomans as Yafai territory, and therefore within British limits.

In March, the British demanded the evacuation of Jalila; Curzon was delighted (3). At last, Whitehall and Delhi were '... playing the same hand ...'. Curzon blamed the Foreign Office for the delay. Meantime, Sultan Abdul Hamid had tried, but failed, to secure German assistance (4). On the 21st March, the Ottomans slipped quietly out of Jalila (5). The Porte reserved

(1) My underlining, that was very much less than Wahab claimed.

(2) p.9.90 n.5

(3) C.P, Curzon - Hamilton, 19.3.03

(4) AIA C 33, HBM Ambassador, Berlin - FO, 16.3.03

(5) LA, Entry from Wahab's diary

the Sultan's 'sovereign rights' there, (1) when notifying the Ottoman intention to evacuate the area. The Foreign Office was concerned that '... General Maitland should avoid any action that might give needless offence ...' to the Porte (2). Wahab and Fitzmaurice held an opposite view. Fitzmaurice arranged for the Union Jack to be flaunted over the evacuated Ottoman positions (3). In answer to the Porte's protests, Wahab defended this action by saying that Ottoman troops had torn down a Union Jack, flown without authority by the Amir's son, over the village of alWarra, and put the pieces into the barrack latrines at Jajila in 1901 (4). Wahab considered that the gesture was necessary to restore British prestige locally; he had, however, not previously mentioned the alWarra incident. It was an opportune, and possibly embroidered, counter-complaint. Curzon

(1) AIA C 33, Musurus Pasha - Lord Lansdowne, 19.3.03

(2) AIA C 33, FO - IO, when forwarding on the Ottoman note, 24.3.03

(3) Lord H.P, Curzon - Hamilton, 13.4.03

(4) AIA C 33, Wahab - For.Dept., 12.4.03

considered the flag-raising 'a little superfluous'; but he was prepared to accept it as raising the British Commissioners' morale after suffering many Ottoman 'indignities'. He did not, however, trust Fitzmaurice (1), who had written criticising O'Connor to a colleague of Curzon's (2).

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A clash of personalities came to a head between Wahab, supported by Fitzmaurice, and Maitland, during April and May 1903; it continued until 20th August, when Maitland went up to Dhala. Fitzmaurice wished to push the Commission's work ahead north-eastwards to the desert, once the Ottomans had evacuated Jalila (3). In the absence of British treaties with the Upper Yafais, justifying British surveys in their areas, tribal agreement could only be secured by a considerable

(1) Lord H.P., Curzon - Hamilton, 1.4.03

(2) C.P., Curzon - Hamilton, 29.7.03

(3) AIA C 32, Fitzmaurice tel - Res, 26.4.03.

Res - Fitzmaurice letter (?) 30.4.03 - date uncertain

expenditure on 'presents' to influential tribesmen. Maitland preferred to allow time to arrange treaties, possibly taking 6 months (1); Wahab pointed out that the Secretary of State had authorised one treaty, whereas Maitland envisaged several. Wahab also objected to the delay; he claimed that the Commission could not work south-westwards, as the Foreign Department had ordered on the India Office's suggestion (2), during the summer heat. Unless work continued north-eastwards, the heavy expenditure on the Commission and its escort would be wasted. He also believed that any appearance of the Commission's dependence upon the signing of Yafai treaties would encourage exorbitant demands.

Maitland disagreed; in his view, once the Amiri border had been demarcated, the Commission could work south-westwards, until the political obstacles to the north-eastwards had been cleared by the spring of 1904. Maitland was riled by Wahab's criticism of his handling

(1) AIA C 32, Wahab - Res, 6.6.03, quoting Res tel - Wahab, 29.5.03

(2) AIA C 33, S of S - Viceroy, 16.5 & Foreign Dept - Res, 19.5.03 (& to S of S)

of tribal politics (1), and by the suggestion that Bury's abortive journey to the Upper Aulaqis should only have been made after prior consultation with Wahab; and he resented Wahab's appeal direct to the Foreign Department, copied to London, Bombay and Constantinople (2), asking for permission to survey north-eastwards. Maitland held up Wahab's telegrams, suggesting they should be sent by mail to save £200. He was piqued that the Commissioners proposed to disregard him and to survey the Shaibi border, north-east of Dhala (3). The Commissioners had been stung by Maitland's request for accounts of all expenditure on the Yafais. They had spent Rs 3371 in under three months, including Rs 740 paid to the Shaibis (4).

- (1) AIA C 32, Res - Wahab, replying to Wahab's letter of 6.6.03, by field telegram
- (2) AIA C 32, Wahab's tel No.275 of 6.6.03
- (3) AIA C 32, tel Res - Simla, London, Bombay & Constantinople, 12.6.03
- (4) AIA C 33, Wahab - Res, 6.5.03

Both sides were frustrated; the survey was near a standstill; and Maitland was meeting unexpected religious difficulties in securing a treaty with the Rassasi Sultan of Beidha (1). The India Office ban on surveying north-eastwards probably originated from Lee-Warner's cautious minute on the Resident's report of religious anti-British feeling amongst the Yafais (2). In Maitland's view, Wahab wrongly held Maitland responsible (3). Allowance should be made for other strains; there was a drought in the Dhala area (4); Maitland was not well, and the weather was 'frightfully hot' (3). It seemed to Maitland that he needed to regain more control over the Boundary Commissioners (3). He had still not despatched Wahab's expensive telegrams of 6th June (5).

On 15th June, the Secretary of State gave cautious

- (1) AIA C 32, Res - Wahab, 13.6.03, para 8
- (2) LA, tel Res - S of S (r) Viceroy, SGB & HBMA, C'ple
- (3) AIA C 32, Maitland D/O - Sir Louis Dane, 14.6.03
- (4) AIA C 32, Wahab - For.Dept., 28.7.03
- (5) p.9.95 n.2

approval for the survey to resume in the Shaibi area '... if ... without difficulty or risk ...' Maitland put himself in the wrong by withholding the telegram from Wahab. But the British Commissioners' attempt to survey as far as the Wadi Bana had already failed through Shaibi opposition; the survey party returned to camp on the 14th. Maitland sent a conciliatory letter to Wahab on the 21st (1). Wahab was not reconciled; he sent a 12 page, typed, foolscap letter of protest to the Foreign Department, complaining of Maitland's interference in Boundary Commission affairs, of Maitland's presumed failure to despatch Wahab's telegram of 6th June, and of the futility of making treaties with the Yafais, who '... did not seem anxious for treaties, qua treaties, regarding them simply as a means of extracting money from the British ...'. In his view, there was unlikely to be any direct, or indirect, beneficial return from such agreements (2). Wahab also sent a telegram, en clair, by-passing

(1) AIA C 32

(2) AIA C 32, Wahab - Foreign Dept., 26.6.03

Maitland, to the Foreign Department; he alleged that important decisions on the Commission's work were being made without the Commissioners' views, which were in conflict with the Resident's, being heard. Wahab could not '... accept responsibility unless this is put a stop to ...' (1). Wahab piled fuel on the Resident's wrath with criticisms that Maitland was exaggerating his own difficulties in securing a treaty with Beidha. Neither Curzon nor Hamilton were '... enamoured ... of Wahab's ... proceedings and advice ...' but Curzon recognised that Wahab's indecision mirrored official faults ...' (2).

Maitland complained privately of Wahab's 'outrageous, and unprovoked attacks' (3); officially, he attributed them to irritation at his rejection of the Commissioners' proposals that Qataba town and the Yubi and Haiki tribal areas should be included

- (1) AIA C 32, tel Wahab - For.Dept., SGB, London & C'ple,
7.7.03
- (2) Lord HP, Curzon - Hamilton, 24.6.03
- (3) AIA C 32, D/O Maitland - Dane, 10.7.03

within the Amir's borders (1). Simla and Westminster were annoyed by this expensive, time-wasting, bickering (2). Curzon was anxious to end the demarcation after completing the line from W. Bana to the western Haushabi border. Arrangements for treaties with the Yafais and Aulakis could then continue without haste. Maitland was to forward on to the Commissioners copies of all correspondence on the Commission's work (3), but the Commissioners would receive orders through the Resident and 'loyal co-operation' was required from all involved (4). Maitland pocketed his injured pride and copied both telegrams to Wahab; Maitland felt that he'd received 'a wiggling' (5). Wahab, slightly smugly, blamed the Resident when forwarding copies of his own correspondence sent abroad earlier, directly.

- (1) AIA C 32, Res - SGB, 10.7.03 (r) S of S, For.Dept.
& C'ple
- (2) AIA C 34, FO - O'Connor, 20.8.03
- (3) AIA C 32, tel For.Dept. - Res, 25.7.03
- (4) AIA C 32, tel For.Dept. - Res (r) SGB, 25.7.03
- (5) AIA C 32, D/O Res - Dane, 2.8.03

Wahab waived his intention to ask for an enquiry because of '... Government's ... expressed wish to close this correspondence ...' (1). Four days later Wahab criticised Maitland's negotiations for Yafai treaties, claiming that the Commissioners were not surprised at the local deposition of Maitland's candidate for the Upper Yafai Sultanate Treaty (2). Wahab suggested that such treaties were undesirable whilst 'delimitation' was proceeding. That doubtless strengthened Maitland's complaint that the Commissioners believed that '... the Aden Protectorate exists for the purpose of being demarcated, and that nothing else matters ...' (3). Following further critical telegrams from Wahab and Fitzmaurice, they were warned that '... continuance of factious spirit ... will call for serious notice ... The survey of the Shaibi border appears to be delayed for hardly adequate reasons ...' (4). On 16th August,

(1) AIA C 32, Wahab - Res, 30.7.03 & to For.Dept.

(2) AIA C 32, Wahab - Res

(3) AIA C 32, D/O Res - Louis Dane, 14.6.03

(4) AIA C 32, tel For.Dept. - Res, for communication to the Commissioners, 8.8.03

Maitland went up to Dhala for a reconciliation with the Commissioners, and to make progress with the Yafai treaties. Wahab accepted Maitland's olive branch (1). Curzon preferred the reconciliation to superseding Maitland '... and leaving these tempestuous Commissioners to do apparently what they like ...' (2).

Maitland's first visit to Dhala surprised him; '... the conditions [for the Commission] ... are nearly as difficult as can be imagined ...'. Maitland and the Commissioners agreed that the Mausedda Yafai section, with whom Maitland had recently concluded a Treaty (3), had less power than Maitland had believed; they did not control the Shaibis. Maitland therefore suggested a separate Shaibi Treaty (4). He signed a treaty with the Hadhrami Yafai section, subject to ratification by the Viceroy; the section was '... one of the smaller sections ...' but living in a strategic, Ottoman-claimed, area (4). There was little justification for the treaty;

(1) AIA C 32, Wahab - Maitland, 21.8.03

(2) CP, Curzon - Hamilton, 26.8.03

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No LVI

(4) AIA C 34, Res - SGB, 30.9.03

but in the prevailing climate of hostility to Ottoman claims, Curzon ratified it. By October, Maitland hoped to obtain a Protectorate treaty with the Upper Aulaqi Sultan, by sending the treaty to Nisab for signature (1). Tribal problems prevented the prestigious Aulaqi Sultan from leaving his home area. Since the Sultan was illiterate, Maitland had reluctantly decided that he must send G.W. Bury, as his only locally experienced Political Officer, to witness the signature (1).

Lee-Warner at the India Office was anxious to forego the liabilities that a treaty with the Upper Yafai would imply. Wahab had denied any benefits from it (2). Later judgements confirmed his opinions (3). But Maitland was now more deeply enmeshed in intrigues to obtain a treaty. Ottoman letters had been '... intercepted before they got to the persons for whom they were intended [in Yafai] and brought to

(1) AIA C 34, Res - Louis Dane, 9.10.03

(2) p.9.97 n.2

(3) L/P&S/10/15, Major H.F. Jacob, Memo of 13.4.06
on Upper Yafai

us ...' (1). The 'interceptor' certainly received a reward, but Maitland's reaction to an abortive Qotaibi ambush of a British postal orderly, within a week, was to destroy the Qotaibi village of Dthi-Hagerab (2). Such double standards in British attitudes were not uncommon during the Boundary Commission.

Maitland asked Wahab to 'remonstrate' with the Ottoman Commissioners at Ottoman officials inviting Upper Yafai leaders to meet Abdullah Pasha, the Acting Ottoman Governor, when the Porte had recognised '... the canton of Yaffa ... to be within the sphere of British influence ...' (1). The Commissioners were as anxious as Maitland to enlarge the British 'sphere of influence'; they carried out a '... unilateral survey in Rubeaten, claimed ... as an integral part of the Ottoman Empire ...' (3). It was finally left outside the British 'border' after acrimonious wrangling in 1904-05. But,

(1) AIA C 34 D/O Res - Wahab, 19.10.03

(2) Bury 'Uz' p.75-99

(3) AIA.C 34, Wahab - For.Dept., 20.10.03

in October, the Foreign Office had instructed O'Connor to protest at Ottoman interference (1). On 21st October, Maitland secured the signature of Sultan Qahtan bin Umar to an Upper Yafai treaty (2). Maitland, in his haste or ignorance, referred to Qahtan as being of the Lower, not of the Upper, Yafai (2). Maitland described him as powerful; he turned out to be a 'man of straw' (3).

The Foreign Department approved Bury's departure for Nisab, with a party to survey the areas as far north as Beihan (4). But, on 8th November, the Department expressed concern at '...the continuous fighting and casualties....The last thing we want is military trouble in Aden interior!..(5). That would have been probable if the Ottomans had supplied arms and ammunition to tribes at odds with the British. Whitehall was also

(1) AIA C 34, tel FO - O'Connor, 23.10.03

(2) AIA C 34, Res - SGB, 22.10.03

(3) p.9.102 n.3

(4) AIA C 34, tel For.Dept. - Res, 23.10.03

(5) AIA C 34, tel to Resident

apprehensive (1). The India Office wanted an early resumption of delimitation south westwards; and only O'Connor urged one survey north-eastwards, to block access to Hadhramaut, as well as another to the south-west (2). The Cabinet was '... most unwilling that the proceedings should be protracted beyond the present cold weather ...', i.e. early April 1904 (3). If practical, treaty negotiations with Beihan and Beidha should be stopped. Questions were expected in Parliament, and Maitland was warned to be ready to provide material in narrative form (4); that was a way of illustrating Ottoman 'provocations' as 'justifying' Britain's escalating demands for more territory. The same technique had been applied during the 1873 Confrontation (5).

Progress was made; by 14th December, Fitzmaurice expected to settle the last remaining point of difference on the Amiri Ottoman Border soon (6). Locally unresolved

(1) AIA C 34, tel S of S - Viceroy, 20.11.03 (r) Res

(2) AIA C 34, tel O'Connor - FO, 24.11.03

(3) AIA C 34, f 497, S of S - Viceroy (r) Res

(4) AIA C 34, tel S of S - Viceroy (r) Res, 12.12.03

(5) p.3.104 n.2

(6) AIA C 34, tel Fitzmaurice - O'Connor, through Resident

differences between the Anglo- Ottoman Commissioners were settled by negotiations in Constantinople as they arose. The British withdrawal from Dhala, and the Commission's move south-westwards, began on 17th December (1). The Resident accepted that a treaty with Beihan was perhaps unnecessary (2), as the Aulakis claimed it as a dependency. Maitland was less willing to give up prospects of a treaty with the Beidha ruler. But, nine days later, Sharif Ahmad was granted a protectorate treaty for Beihan (3), covering the extensive tribal areas of the Musabain, the BalHarith and the Marada. Mushaikh (4). Maitland had no knowledge of the area covered. Bury had passed through Beihan in 1901; he later claimed to have

(1) AIA C 34, tel Res - S of S, For.Dept. SGB & C'ple, 19.12.03, quoting Wahab

(2) AIA C 34, tel Res - For.Dept., S of S, SGB, & C'ple, 21.12.03

(3) Aitchison 'Treaties' No. XLVIII

(4) AIA C 34, Res - S of S, For.Dept., SGB & C'ple, 30.12.03

'engineered' the treaty (1). He was affectionately remembered by the Sharif's son (2); and the Ashraf maintained contact with Bury after his disgrace. In reality, Maitland, by this treaty, created a 'chief' out of a shrewd, respected, local intermediary, who had no civil authority over the powerful desert BalHarith tribe, an offshoot of the Yam Confederation of Nejran, or over the racially and culturally distinct neighbouring hill tribe of the Musabain. By including the Marada Mushaikh (3) Maitland laid the foundations for subsequent friction between future rulers of Beiha and the desert Karab tribe, over whose boundaries the Marada grazed.

Maitland hoped for more information from Bury's visit to Beiha. Bury left on 31st December. His intended local Hammami escort of visitors to Aden were unexpectedly called away by the Upper Aulaqi Sultan in

(1) AIA ²⁸/₄, Bury - Lt. Col. H.M. Abud, 7.4.05

(2) Sharif Hussain bin Ahmad to writer, in conversations in 1955

(3) See 1.11

the middle of December (1). That was possibly because the Sultan claimed the Beihan area and objected to a separate Anglo-Beihani agreement. Maitland then vainly expected that the Upper Aulaqi Shaikh, who recognised the Upper Aulaqi Sultan as the head of his own Maani division of the Upper Aulaqis, as well as of the Mahajri division, would escort Bury and his party (1). Maitland had hastily signed an ill-considered treaty with the Shaikh (2). Bury claimed responsibility (3).

Maitland had excessive, and mistaken, confidence in Bury's local experience; he allowed Bury to leave with 'a large native [Indian] survey party', unfamiliar with, and increasingly apprehensive of, local conditions, across country unfamiliar to Bury since 1899 (4). Bury chose to travel through Illahi territory with a Fadhli guide. The Illaheen rejected Fadhli suzerainty, so Bury's

(1) AIA C 34, f 527 D/O Maitland - Wahab

(2) Aitchison 'Treaties' No XXXIII

(3) p.9.107 n.1

(4) Bury 'Uz' p.111-117

choice of company was tactless. He proposed the shortest caravan route to Nisab, passing through mountainous country beyond Dathina, where he could only travel with the goodwill of the Illaheen, which he evidently lacked (1). In such circumstances, an escort of the 102nd B.N.I. and a dozen, Indian, Aden Troopers was probably a provocative hindrance, like the survey party, and inadequate for an escort. Maitland naively expected this motley expedition '... to endeavour to ... survey ... the border region south-west from Beihan as far as the Yaffai country ...' (2). He hoped that Bury would also cover the Rassasi Sultanate of Beidha. The enterprise was foolhardy; Bury could probably have made the journey alone; but Maitland was fortunate that the party returned from Dathina. Maitland blamed the setback on the Eurasian surveyor, Mr. Claudius, refusing to continue '... after one of his sub-surveyors was killed

(1) LA, Bury's Report of 10.1.04 admitted that the Ahl Hassana had refused him passage on the 7th

(2) LA, Res - For.Dept. (r) S of S, 17.1.04

... at long range ...' on January 8th (1).

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The survey of the Haushabi areas was completed quickly and without Anglo-Ottoman friction; but the frail truce between Maitland and Wahab collapsed again. The Haushabi Sultan's methods of controlling his tribes '... were not altogether such as would commend themselves to a British officer ...'; but British policy was '... to interfere as little as possible with Chiefs ...'. Wahab's '... well-meant exhortations to the Haushabi ...' on behalf of the Amri tribesmen were embarrassing (2). Wahab was politely asked to mind his own business. Maitland (3) and Wahab (4) each gave their own version of the affair. Wahab implied that the

(1) AIA C 34, Res - For.Dept., 14.1.04

(2) AIA C 35, Res - Wahab, 13.2.04

(3) AIA C 35, Res - SGB, 13.2.04

(4) AIA C 35, Wahab - Res, 18.2.04, commenting on Res letter to SGB of 13.2.04 & LA, Wahab - Sec, P & S Dept., India Office, 5.2.04

Haushabi chief's ill-health incapacitated him as a ruler, and that his methods alienated his tribesmen. Meantime, Wahab had invited the Amir of Dhala, paying him a farewell visit, to remain as the Commissioners' unofficial tribal adviser (1). Wahab also began to criticise Maitland's preparations for the Commission's security in Subaihi territory (2). Maitland answered Wahab's criticism (3).

The Subaihi boundary delimitation was a hurried affair; existing maps of the area were inadequate; and there was no paramount Shaikh; but Maitland had orders to complete the survey during the cool weather (4). As a result, the boundary cut through some tribal sections' territory (5). The intention was to demarcate a border; and no new treaties were made. Maitland was disillusioned; he was '... being turned out in

(1) AIA C 35 D/O Res - Sir Louis Dane, 20.2.04

(2) AIA C 35, Wahab - Res, 27.1.04 & tel Wahab - For.Dept.

(3) AIA C 35, tel Res - For.Dept., 30.1.04

(4) p.9.105 n.3

(5) L/P&S/10/15 f 539, Minute sheet of 22.2.06

June ...'; he believed Wahab to '... be a little off his head ...' (1); and he now saw no benefit from demarcating a Subaihi border which the British could not control (2). Maitland was, originally, content that Wahab should conduct all negotiations with the Subaihis and 'dictate' the military arrangements, provided that no fighting occurred (2). Minor fighting occurred early; the small Khalifi section, uninformed of the survey's coming by Wahab's 'tribal adviser', the Amir, fired on the Commission. One of their towers was destroyed in retaliation; the Amir departed for Dhala; and Wahab blamed the incident variously on the Amir, or on intrigue by the Haushabi, or Abdali, Sultans (3). Wahab also blamed the Abdali Sultan, probably with reason, for earlier Government differences with the Matarfi, Makhdumi and Mansouri sections (4).

In Wahab's view, the Abdali chief poisoned the

(1) AIA C 35 D/O Maitland - Edgerly (SGB), 31.1.04

Sir Louis
(2) AIA C 35 D/O Maitland -/Dane, 31.1.04

(3) AIA C 35, Bury - Res, 14.2.04

(4) AIA C 35, Wahab - Res, 10.2.04

Residency against his Subaihi neighbours. In Bury's view, Wahab was too indiscriminating in assessing intelligence (1). Towards the end of February, Maitland visited Wahab in camp; the Commissioners were camping separately from the Political Staff, because of the shortage of water and grazing. During a return visit by Wahab, Maitland gave Wahab his views '... pretty freely ...'. He criticised Wahab, '... the most egotistical and conceited person East of Suez ...', who '... always looked on himself as a heaven born political ...' (2). It irritated Maitland that Wahab should '... pose as having a far superior acquaintance with the Arabs ...'. The Chief Secretary in Bombay sympathised with Maitland's views; he believed the Foreign Department were '... tired of the Egotism ...' of Wahab (3).

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- (1) AIA C 35, Bury - Maitland, 12.2.04
- (2) AIA C 35, D/O Maitland - Edgerley, 28.2.04
- (3) AIA C 35, D/O Edgerley - Maitland, 10.3.04

S.W. Edgerley, in principle, supported Maitland's wish for a permanent Political Officer at Dhala, for raising a tribal levy for service in the hinterland and other measures for extending British influence outside Aden; but he wished to go slowly (1). He believed that patience would bring this, even though '... the India Office ... were altogether opposed to any development outside Aden ...'. Lord Lamington, the Governor of Bombay, also supported Maitland; he asked Curzon to approve the Dhala Political Officer and an increased subsidy for the Amir, before Curzon went on leave (2). Lamington continued his pressure and claimed that Curzon, who was his personal friend, had accepted Maitland's proposal (3). Maitland had stayed with Lamington in May. On 23rd September 1904, the Dhala political appointment was approved for a year; it was later made into a permanent appointment (4). A brief

(1) p.9.113 n.3

(2) LP, Reel 675, Lamington - Curzon, 19.4.04

(3) LP, Lamington - Ag. Viceroy, Lord Ampthill, 31.5.04

(4) M.P., (M934) para 21 of the 1901-05 Admin. Report

'forward' policy in the hinterland had begun. It was cancelled by Lord Morley as Secretary of State in 1906.

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Subaihi territory was lacking in water supplies and sparsely inhabited with difficult terrain. Wahab could not work there quickly enough to satisfy Maitland. By April, Wahab had reached the south-west corner; he asked Maitland for information on the original Ottoman occupation of Shaikh Said (1); and, when that was not forthcoming from the Residency, he suggested asking the India Office (2). Probably Wahab wished to dislodge the Ottomans to make Perim more secure. To bring more pressure upon the Ottoman Commissioners, Wahab asked for reinforcements to his escort, including artillery. Maitland refused, because the gunners in Aden were British. By 17th April, Maitland decided to withdraw all British troops from

(1) p.3.1 - 3.5

(2) AIA C 35, Wahab - Res, 10.4.04

Subaihi country, because of the hot weather. Wahab was informed that the Commission would, thenceforward, be supplied by sea, replacing land communications (1).

The Ottomans objected to the British claim to the Atifi section; the Atifis had claimed to be under Ottoman suzerainty in 1871 (2). The Ottomans now reproached the Atifis for 'associating', as Wahab indignantly described it, 'with Infidels' (3). The disadvantages of a hasty, arbitrary, Subaihi border, cutting across nomadic tribal grazing grounds, now became obvious. The British and Ottoman Commissioners disagreed about the coastal limits. The Ottomans claimed the Atifis' coastline; Maitland had advised that the Atifis were within the Ottomans' eastern coastal limits in 1901; and control of the Atifis was important to the Ottomans, because the anchorage of Ras al Ara, used by arms and tobacco smugglers, would then have come under their control. But the British Commissioners counter-

(1) AIA C 35, Res - Wahab, 22.4.04

(2) p.2.53 n.3

(3) L/P&S/10/15 f 85, Wahab - IO, 14.5.04

claimed a border line from Mudariba to Kuddam on the Red Sea, taking in Hakimi territory, recognised as Ottoman since before 1870 (1).

O'Connor proposed, on August 11th, to renounce any claims along the Red Sea, provided that the Ottomans accepted a line running from Mudariba to Ras Turba, placing the Atifi within British limits, as well as the inclusion of additional Ottoman-claimed Yafai dependencies north east of the Shaibi border (2). These included the Rubatain area (3). Wrangling however continued, from the autumn of 1904 (4), until 21st April. The Porte was reluctant to concede British demands recognising any boundary 'north-east' of Shaibi territory 'to the desert'; instead, Britain was offered control of the Red Sea coast up to Kuddam, but excluding Shaikh Said, on December 30th, 1904 (5). No mention was made of any

(1) p.3.2 n.3

(2) IOL, FO Memo B156 of 11 Dec 1905, printed March '06

(3) p.9.103 n.3

(4) LA (L/P&S/9/61), Fitzmaurice, Perim - For.Dept. (r)
S of S, 6.11.04

(5) FO 78 5439, tel HBM C d'A, C'ple - FO

delimitation to the desert; but an undertaking was made that neither country should send troops into the 'Nine Cantons'; and the Porte undertook to cede no territory to a third Power. The Foreign Office rejected the Ottoman proposals (1). On 7th February, Britain offered to demarcate the border from Mudariba to Shaikh Murad (2). Britain reserved her right to move troops within the limits of the Nine Cantons, while noting the Porte's intention not to do so. The Porte was warned that, failing Anglo-Ottoman agreement, Britain would decline further negotiations and take appropriate unilateral measures to define the border, and to maintain her rights.

After Fitzmaurice's return to Aden, and a demonstration of 'moral' naval force, in support of the British Commission, the Porte gave way and accepted the British demarcation lines, while the British deleted any reference to Ottoman forces undertaking not to enter the Nine Cantons. But the Porte maintained some

(1) FO 78 5440, tel FO - HBM C'ple, 9.1.05

(2) FO 78 5440, tel FO - HBM C'ple

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reservations. The boundary, was '... generally in a line north-east from Lakmet es Shab to the desert ...'. No mention was made of Beihan, with which the British now had a treaty, which had not been accurately mapped. Nor was any reference made to Beidha, where the Resident had been authorised to conclude a Treaty with the Rassasi Sultan.

It was not till 26th April that a despatch from Perim island reported that, after 'strenuous negotiations' '... the 300 miles frontier between the Aden Protectorate and Yemen ...' from the great Arabian desert to Point Murad on the Gulf of Aden ...' had been 'satisfactorily' settled (1). The despatch from Constantinople on 29th April was significantly different; that recorded the fixing of 'the Western and Northern frontier of the Aden Hinterland in the direction of the desert ...' from the River Bana southwest to Shaikh Murad (2). The Ottomans were not prepared to admit of any extension of the border to

(1) The Times, 27.4.05

(2) The Times, 1.5.05

the desert which would bar their access eastwards. Indeed, Sultan Abdul Hamid, not unexpectedly (1), never ratified the Boundary Agreement. Instead, there was an Anglo Ottoman exchange of notes, maps of the frontier and of the 'proces-verbal', exchanged between the Commissioners (2); and by 1914 the British copies of these documents had been lost (3).

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The Porte had negotiated from a position of increasing weakness: the annual death toll of troops in the Yemen was estimated at 10,000 a year, with a military expenditure of £500,000 p.a., during the Zaidi revolt from 1902 (4). The Yemen disturbances encouraged '...discontent among the whole Arab population of the

(1) See p.9.26 n.3

(2) MP, M934, O'Connor - Sir Edward Grey, 7.2.06

(3) FO 195/2456/84, FO - HBMA C'ple, 19.1.14

(4) IOL File 57/1905, HBMA C'Ple - FO, 24.7.07

neighbouring regions ...' (1). Deserters from other Arab areas crossed into the British zone throughout the period. Some were junior officers (2). Reinforcements had to be sent from Turkey in Europe to the Yemen; Bulgaria watched these troop movements 'with considerable interest' (3); and the Yemen operations were unpopular in Turkey (3).

(1) p.9.120 n.4

(2) BSC 1900/02, Wahab's BC diary of 11.8.02, forwarded
Res - S of S, 18.8.02

(3) IOL File 57/1905, HBMA C'ple - FO, 24.5.05

Section 10. Aden's Garrison and Residency Staff

Commander S.B. Haines had considered Aden to be the best site on the Bombay Suez mail route for a coaling station. Haines stated that Aden could be made impregnable. The 'fortress of Aden' did resist Yemeni attacks in 1839, 1840, 1841 and 1846; but local assailants lacked artillery and seapower. Aden's 'fortress' was centred on the Isthmus; there, the garrison, the Ordnance and Commissariat stores, the food reserves and other essential supplies were concentrated. The capture, or disloyalty, of Crater's local population could not appreciably weaken the garrison (1). But the garrison could not secure Aden's harbour, or the coal depot, the *raisons d'être* for the British presence. Their security depended upon the Indian Navy until 1863, and on the Royal Navy thereafter. By the 1860's, Britain had seagoing ironclads (2); there were 50 in 1872 against

(1) L/Mil/7/644-649, Quotation from Lord Harding's Memo of 22.6.47 in Col. Jervois' Report

(2) J.R.U.S.I. Vol XVI of 1872 p.58 'Modern Ships of War' by the Assistant Constructor of the Navy

34 French (1); and British ships had more guns and of a heavier calibre than the French (1). In 1876, the Ottomans, with 26 ironclads, were probably the fourth most powerful fleet, on paper; but their ships' armour was the then-obsolete 4½" plating and much of their fleet remained in harbour (2). The Royal Navy could dominate any single adversary but might not be able to maintain British naval supremacy in Home^{and} Indian waters simultaneously. If Britain lost control of the Mediterranean, after the opening of the Suez Canal, Mauritius was, initially, considered to be a more vital naval base than Aden; but later that view changed and Aden's value was recognised.

General Sir William Mansfield, C. in C. of the Bombay Army, recognised in 1862 that Aden's harbour and coal depots could be captured by a naval 'coup de main'

(1) J.R.U.S.I. Vol XVI of 1872, p.586/587 and 594/595,
W. Vernon Harcourt, Q.C., M.P., 15.5.72

(2) J.R.U.S.I. Vol XX 1876, p.346, Lt. Col. C.E.H. Vincent
"The Turkish Forces and the Eastern Question", 14.2.76

immediately after a declaration of war. Foreign naval squadrons and establishments '... in the Eastern Seas ...' had the strength for that (1). A single modern 50 gun frigate with rifled guns could outrange and outgun the 19 smooth bore guns, which were the defence of Aden's harbour (1). The harbour entrance at Steamer Point was about 6,500 yds wide, with deep water close under the Little Aden shore. R.N. Charts of the coastline in 1860, were readily available. Aden harbour was known, and vulnerable, to foreign navies. But without heavy expenditure, and a larger garrison, little could be done to prevent an enemy landing on the many small sheltered bays around the peninsula, or on Little Aden. Aden needed naval protection. Instead, a new battery was built to cover Holkat Bay, a 'back entrance' to Crater; the Main Pass entrance to Crater was strengthened and a bridge was built over that pass to give the garrison greater mobility (2).

(1) IOL L/Mil/&/644-649, quoting Mansfield's Minute of 21.10.62 on Acting Res, Maj. Gen. R.W. Honnor's Report of 1.9.62 on Aden's defences

(2) AAR 1867/68

Lord Mayo visited Aden and toured its defences with Lord Napier of Magdala on December 8th and 9th, 1868. Colonel Sir O.T. Burne was then Lord Mayo's Private Secretary; he had been Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief in 1861-62. The Governor General Designate's party had earlier visited the Suez Canal Works with Monsieur de Lesseps; and they accepted that the Suez Canal was going to be opened. Official British opinion had tended to overestimate the difficulties. Lord Mayo summed up his conclusions in a private Memo written aboard ship after leaving Aden (1). Aden was undefended against modern warships and modern artillery; iron-plated monitors and some heavy artillery would be the cheapest and most effective defence; the settlement would grow, as a result of the new Canal, to a town of 40,000 people (2), and it would need an adequate water supply; local civilian labour should have a new town beyond the present settlement (3); Little Aden should be acquired; a

(1) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Appendix IX

(2) See Graph E; population reached about 1905

(3) p.7.5 n.2

railway should link the Isthmus defences with Steamer Point; and Aden's defences needed immediate attention. Mayo believed that a new defence scheme, to cover the harbour entrance, Steamer Point, and the coal depots, might be a temporary solution. Major General E.L. Russell, the Resident, had already raised most of these points (1). Lord Napier pressed for action (2); and his appointment as C. in C. India from 1870-1876 may have hastened action.

A Committee, consisting of Major General Sir W. Merewether, Major General E.L. Russell and Captain J. Mahon, R.A., was appointed to report on the defences required for the protection of the Port, the Crater and Little Aden (3). Their report was submitted on March 5th. They proposed fewer, but larger, guns and a garrison, doubled in size, of 2,500 men (4). They wanted the European - but not the

(1) AAR 1867/68, para 12

(2) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Minute dated 26.2.69

(3) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Bombay Govt. Res 239 of 5.2.70

(4) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, para 49 of their Report

Indian - troops to be issued with breech-loading rifles (1). The absence of a naval officer on the Committee was probably a mistake; and the presence of the Resident and his predecessor possibly weighted the Committee's views in favour of the Residency's local military and political requirements and against purely defensive measures against sea-borne attacks. Merewether had advocated control of the coastal plain to prevent tribal raiding (2); and a larger garrison would be available in peacetime to support the Aden Troop inland.

The Secretary to the Government of Bombay's Public Works Department, Colonel M.K. Kennedy, R.E., criticised the Committee's proposals for 'large expenditure' to make Aden '... an almost impregnable stronghold ...' (3). He saw no 'urgent grounds' for action. He believed that Aden's value as a coaling station for Indian mail ships

(1) IOL, AM Reel 318, Lord Halifax - Duke of Argyll, 22.1.69.

A topical subject of controversy, since Argyll was opposed to Indian troops having breech-loaders

(2) p.2.8 n.1

(3) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Minute dated 10.5.70

might decline. The opening of the canal might allow coal to be delivered competitively to Suez via the Canal; and developments in marine engineering allowed steamers to carry 12 to 14 days coal supply. Such steamers might not need to coal at Aden. Aden was far off the track of vessels using the Red Sea and the Canal, and not touching at Aden. Perim was a more strategic naval base to command the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Kennedy favoured strong defensive works in Perim, with two heavy monitors based there, to cover the 12 mile wide Straits. He proposed two 18 ton guns on each 11 knot monitor. 18 ton guns had a range of just over $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles (1). Kennedy did not deal with the problem of watering a garrison on Perim; and his proposals did nothing to improve the defence of Aden's coal depot from an enemy already in the Indian Ocean. Kennedy thought such an assault unlikely. Lord Mayo's Council, however, recommended the provision of a monitor for Aden's defence

(1) J.R.U.S.I. Vol XVI of 1872, p.58 "Modern Ships of War", N. Barnaby, 29.1.72

in August (1). In September, Lt. General A. Spence, C. in C. Bombay Army, minuted in favour of the Committee's proposals and against Colonel Kennedy. But Spence also proposed fortifications to hold Perim. Meantime, improved 9" rifled guns could not be mounted on the Morbut and Tarshaine Forts because their platforms and carriages, ordered from England, were late in arriving (2).

The Bombay Government offered conflicting advice, applied for an Engineer officer, familiar with '... the latest improvements in the Artillery and the formation of batteries, especially for Harbour defences, and whose judgement on such matters may be thoroughly relied on ...' (3). He was to report on Aden's, and Bombay's, needs. Colonel Jervois, C.B., 'Deputy Director of Works (Fortifications) and Secretary to the Works Committee' was selected by the India Office. Jervois had '... recently

- (1) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Gov. in Council - S of S, 19.8.70; action postponed by S of S, 20.10.70
- (2) AAR 70/71
- (3) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, B^o 383/2020 MW of 15.10.70 - Gov. Gen. with enclosures, including the conflicting reports

surveyed naval arsenals in Great Britain and the Colonies ...' (1). Jervois' report was ready on 4th January, 1872. It was printed in Calcutta on the 25th. Over half the 120 paragraph report dealt with Aden. Jervois added suggestions for work at Perim, if funds were available.

Jervois proposed a defensive 'hold' to cover Hedjuff - Steamer Point - Ras Morbut and Ras Tarshaine. That would secure the anchorage, the naval stores and the coal depots. Jervois doubted whether the fortifications could bear the firing of their existing guns without collapsing. He favoured new batteries protected by iron shields, rather than turrets; shields were cooler and the smoke and fumes would clear away more quickly after firing. Jervois proposed shore-based torpedo batteries to cover the middle of the Bay, and fast, shallow-draught, unarmoured, wooden gunboats, with 18-ton guns, to cover the farther side of the harbour towards Little Aden. These boats would shelter from fire in the shallow water north of the Little Aden peninsula until required. The

(1) IOL, L/Mil/7/644-649, Argyll - Mayo 154 of 15.6.71

strategic landing place at Telegraph Bay, where the telegraph cable came ashore, was to be covered by new positions on Ras Tarshaine. Other new, or altered, gunpositions were on Flint Island, on Ras Morbut, and on the Hedjuff - Steamer Point road. Jervois' plans required no increase in the garrison's strength but more European troops. They cost £42 p.a. more per soldier than Indian troops.

Mayo's successor, Lord Northbrook, had a copy of Jervois report on his voyage out. At Malta he met Jervois and discussed his report (1). Northbrook considered that it would be '... of great use ..., the opinion ... of one of the best Military Engineers of this or of any other country ...' (2). Northbrook doubted the wisdom of increasing Indian debts for defence expenditure on Indian mainland ports when he considered attacks unlikely; but he was prepared, after more consideration, to strengthen Aden's seaward defences (1).

(1) IOL, AM Reel 316, Northbrook - Argyll, 27.4.72

(2) NP, Northbrook - Argyll, 4.4.72

He was not prepared to spend money on Perim. Perim was a liability without British control of the sea. Northbrook's compromise was to accept Jervois' plans for a 'hold' to cover Steamer Point, but to reject his proposal for gunboats. Northbrook believed that alternative floating batteries could be improvised in an emergency. These revised plans were still estimated to cost £175,000, as against Jervois' £245,000, for equipment and capital expenditure (1). Probably Jervois' report made Northbrook more aware of Aden's precarious defences and therefore more determined to oppose Ottoman advances southwards in January 1873 (2).

Work proceeded slowly but continuously in strengthening the natural obstacles between Ras Tarshaine and Ras Morbut by escarpments, until, by 1890, work in that area was 'practically complete' (3). By 1877, improved artillery - 10 nine inch guns - had been sited

(1) L/Mil/7/644-649, Gov. Gen. in Council No 44,

PW - S of S, 28.3.76

(2) 3.27 - 3.31

(3) AAR 90/91, para 141

as Jervois had suggested (1). Cheap labour used on the fortifications included destitute freed slaves, released by the Royal Navy in Aden, and Somali and Yemeni immigrants. By now, the British no longer feared local attacks. The military guard at the Barrier Gate was relieved in January, 1882, by a single policeman (2). But Aden's garrison suffered from increasing demands on its strength after the British occupation of the Somali Coast began in 1884. In 1885, Indian troops in Aden were having as little as two nights per week in bed, and the troops' health suffered (3). By 1900, Aden's landward defences remained inadequate to resist an attack supported by artillery (4).

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- (1) AAR 76/77, para 38
- (2) AIA 885, Res - Maj. Gen. Commanding Aden Brigade
(The Resident) 4.1.82 and 5.1.82
- (3) AAR 84/85, Sanitary Report by the Surgeon, 4th
Bombay Rifles
- (4) Autobiography of Sir O'Moore Creagh, London, 1924,
p.209 (hereafter Creagh 'Autobiography')

Sir Bartle Frere advised the Duke of Argyll in 1873 that the Governor General of India needed a naval adviser (1). Frere recognised that the cutting of the Suez Canal had changed naval strategy. Mediterranean nations were now 10 days nearer the Indian Ocean than British fleets in home waters; and, in Frere's opinion, the Indian Army was not in a satisfactory state to face an invasion. The Canal contributed to the increased use of steamships, replacing sail via the Cape, on the European route to the East. So Aden became, like Gibraltar, Malta and Hong Kong, a coaling station, and an imperial naval base of prime importance. Britain could not defend all her colonies militarily, but it was the British intention, by 1891, to keep the British navy at a strength at least equal to any other two Powers combined. Fortresses like Aden's were only required to hold out until relieved by British sea-power.

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(1) AM Reel 318, Frere - Argyll, 31.5.73

British influence in the Gulf of Aden had depended upon the Indian Navy, until that force was disbanded in 1863. The Royal Navy could not provide a wholly adequate substitute; R.N. officers lacked the local experience, because particular R.N. vessels and officers were not retained in the Indian Ocean area. Therefore the need was recognised to provide '... a class of officers possessing local knowledge and experience to aid Her Majesty's Naval Forces when employed on the Arabian and Persian Coasts ...' (1). But the Aden Residency staff were not increased. Nor was the Aden Residency always able to call on an R.N. vessel for assistance. Previously an I.N. vessel was stationed at Aden. R.N. ships' captains were able to, and sometimes did, refuse Residency requests. Correspondence on reconstructing the Indian Navy, to meet the Government of India's needs for warships, did not remedy this (2).

Aden Residents consistently urged the need to have

(1) LB, Gov. B^O No 15 - S of S, 28.3.66

(2) PRO, Admiralty 127/11. Correspondence on this in the file appears to be missing

a guard ship at Aden after the opening of the Suez Canal. Even before that, foreign, and particularly French, warships were more familiar visitors to Aden than R.N. vessels. After the Egyptian occupation of Berbera in 1873, Egyptian vessels were the most familiar warships in the Gulf of Aden. Brigadier J.S. Schneider warned that, without an Aden based R.N. ship, British influence in the area would decline, and, that the Residency would be unable to collect accurate local intelligence (1). Schneider's successor, Brigadier F.A.E. Loch, made the same points. Loch's proposal for an Aden based warship was opposed by the C. in C. East India Station, Rear Admiral J. Corbett. One probable objection was a naval dislike of R.N. ships, more suitable for cooler climates, being kept on the Arabian Coast, in summer (2). But the Secretary of State considered that; 'A vessel of war ought certainly to be always at Aden quite irrespective of any [unarmed Indian Marine] vessel ... at the Resident's

(1) IOL, P & S 76 f 105, Res - SGB (v) S of S, 17.4.76

(2) PRO Admiralty 127/31, Admiralty No 95 - Rear Adml. W. Gore Jones, 9.4.80, referring to ill health aboard H.M.S. Seagull in summer 1879

disposal ...' (1). That, however, would have required withdrawing one of the 3 vessels on duty in the Persian Gulf, or, increasing the Indian annual grant of £70,000 for R.N. ships in 'the Indian seas' (2). In addition, calls on the Navy elsewhere increased. In 1884-1886 available naval forces were preoccupied with developments in the Sudan (3). Subsequently, the Red Sea became the concern of the Mediterranean, not of the East Indies Station (4).

From 1884, there were additional calls for naval assistance on the Somali Coast. Sufficient R.N. ships were not available to provide surveillance of all the coasts of the Gulf of Aden; and some foreign warships were welcomed locally. In 1893, the French cruiser, 'Étoile', '... was supposed to have had unauthorised dealings with ...' the Wahidi chief of Balhaf (5). In

(1) IOL, P & S, Vol 5, Note on the Minute Sheet on Res - SGB (r) S of S, 7.2.79

(2) IOL, P & S, Vol 5, Minute answering n.1 above

(3) PRO, Admiralty 127/34

(4) Navy Lists, published for H.M.S.O.

(5) PRO, Admiralty 127/19, Bombay & Aden Records 1891-94.
Report by Cmdr. of HMS Lapwing - Rr Adml W K Kennedy,

the absence of close contact between the Residency and the coastal population, the British were opposed to visits by British or foreign nationals to South Arabia. They remained, throughout the period, sensitive about foreign naval activity, and the actual, or rumoured, establishment of local foreign naval bases. Unfortunately, the Lords of the Admiralty apparently had reservations too; they did not want '... too much power [given] to the Indian Government ...' even over the few Indian Defence Vessels with their I.M. Officers, with R.N.R. status (1). Control of those vessels was to remain with 'the Imperial Government' (2). In the circumstances, Aden's naval requirements were unlikely to be given much attention while Aden remained an Indian dependency.

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- (1) PRO, Admiralty 127/20, Sec. Admiralty - Rear Admiral Sir E.R. Fremantle, 27.11.90
- (2) PRO, Admiralty 127/20, Report of Joint Admiralty and India Office Committee on Manning the Floating Defences of the Indian Harbours

The Aden Troop

Aden always required local agricultural supplies; and scurvy remained a hazard to the garrison until lime juice was issued to the troops (1). While the Government of Bombay did not want to become involved in Yemeni politics, '... the best exertions ... of the civil and military authorities at Aden to adopt the most effectual means for securing the place against attack, and for protecting as far as possible, the supplies ...' were required from 1839 (2). Commander S.B. Haines suggested the use of cavalry. Only cavalry, or camelry, could provide such an arm against semi-nomads. The Government of India suggested that as an Irregular Horse had protected Sind from its former raiders, similar methods might be successful for Aden (3). The comparison was not wholly apt. Sind had the Bombay Army nearby to support the Irregular Horse; Aden did not. Haines, however, duly

(1) AIA 1074, Report of Surgeon Major Jackson, 14.4.87

(2) AF1 Gov. in Council B^O - Cmdr. S.B. Haines, 22.3.39

(3) AF1 Offg Sec., G of I, No 2070 of 22.4.39 - SGB

recruited a troop of 20 Abdali horsemen under command of the Sultan's son, Fadh1 (1). They were useful so long as British and Abdali interests coincided. After their disbandment, there were plans to replace them in 1855 by Indian Irregular cavalry. These cavalry were diverted to the Persian War, and Indian camelry replacements proved ineffective. The Yemenis were much better camelmasters. The Government of India, however, favoured camelry (2).

Major William Merewether had served with the Sind Horse with distinction against Baluchi raiders; and he believed that Irregular Cavalry were required '... for police purposes at Aden ...' (3). Arguing from his Sind experience, he suggested, two years later, that such Horse, '... being constantly on the move about, will prove

(1) Jacob 'Kings' p.45

(2) LA, G of I No 1044 of 9.12.65 - SGB (B^o asked Merewether for his views)

(3) L B^o 1863-66, Gov B^o - S of S No 43 of 30.9.65, forwarding AAR 1864/65, wherein, at para 50, was Merewether's proposal

to the Arabs that Her Majesty's Government is in earnest when it proclaims that peace must be preserved ...'(1). The Horse, recruited in India and known as the Aden Troop, arrived in March, 1868. In 1867, Merewether had emphasised the less aggressive duties of the future troop. It was primarily '... to keep open the communications and to afford protection to convoys coming into Aden with provisions and stores for the Garrison and Town ... where hitherto traders have been subject to incessant molestation and loss both of life and property ...' (2). Mention was made of the Troop's capacity '... to prove to evildoers that there is a paramount power ready and prepared to punish when punishment is necessary ...'; but Merewether did not then suggest the use of the Troop beyond range of Aden. They were principally for use between Aden and Shaikh Othman territory, previously in dispute between the Abdalis and Fadhlis. Their lines

(1) AAR 1867/68, para 13

(2) AIA 560 f 624, Res - SGB, 14.4.71, quoting Merewether's 45/243 of 15.4.67 - SGB

were on the Khor Maksar plain, beyond Aden's fortifications.

The Aden Troop needed time to become adapted to service in the Yemen and later on the Somali Coast. The isolated Troop lines were far from Aden supplies; and the men, enlisted in India, developed scurvy (1). They were moved temporarily to Lahej. Their first Commandant, Lieutenant Myers, was praised for conducting his 'delicate duty' of patrolling in tribal territory 'with great judgement'. But Myers' health possibly suffered from malaria, caught in Lahej (2). He was succeeded by Captain, later Lt. Col., G.S. Stevens, who arrived in 1870 and left in 1885 (3). The men Stevens came to command were armed with 'cumbresome', double barrelled, muzzle loading, smooth bore carbines, 'ill-adapted' for Cavalry use. Their ammunition was specially manufactured in the Hyderabad Arsenal; that was inconvenient and expensive. But worst of all, '... many

(1) AAR 68/69

(2) AAR 1872/73. This happened to another Acting Commandant

(3) Commissioned in 20th NI, 10.12.1853

of the [local] Arabs ... possessed Rifles and other improved European firearms ...'; and even local matchlocks had a far longer range than the troopers' carbines (1).

The Resident knew that '... Native Cavalry ... proceeding on service ...' might be issued with breech-loading rifles (2). As the Aden Troop were permanently available for active service, Major General C.W. Tremenheere applied for rifles (3). The Troop had only narrowly escaped a reverse by a hasty retreat in 1871 (4). Rifles would have made that situation less precarious. Political objections, however, arose. The Government of India had refused Snider rifles for the Sind Horse, so the Commander in Chief was unwilling to recommend rifles for the Troop (5). Possibly Tremenheere's rash use of the Troop in 1871, on an offensive patrol,

(1) AIA 574, Cmdr. Aden Troop - Res, 9.X.71

(2) IOL, AIA 574, Mil. Sec., G of I 4852 of 23.11.71,
copied to GOC Aden f.i.o.c. Aden Troop

(3) AIA 574, Res - SGB, 8.3.72

(4) p.2.48 n.1

(5) AIA 574 f 59, Report of Adjut Gen, 19.4.72

was an argument against issuing rifles (1). So long as the troop was patrolling the open plain between Aden and Shaikh Othman, on firm ground, as originally intended, the Troops' horses could outdistance camels and there was no danger of being ambushed in acacia scrub (2). Further away, there was soft sand, where horses would soon be winded but local camels would have no trouble, and elsewhere there was thick scrub.

Tremenheere's reprimand in 1871 prevented the Troop operating without local consent outside the Abdali and Aqrabi areas until after 1873 (2). In 1872, neither the Alawi nor the Haushabi chief even answered letters, proposing a visit by the Troop to their territories (3). But Captain Stevens had begun to provide the first '... valuable routes description ...' of the country near Aden in 1870/71. The Resident commented; '... our

(1) p.2.50 - 2.51

(2) AIA 560 f 679, Sec For Dept - Ag SGB, 4.7.71, later forwarded to Resident

(3) AIA 574, Stevens - Tremenhheere, 8.1.72 and Tremenhheere - Stevens, 9.1.72

ignorance of the geography ... is remarkable ...' (1). Until 1873, the Aden Troop did not, however, cross the Haushabi border, north of Abdali territory. But, after the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation of 1873 (2), Stevens was able to travel, and to live, in the Hinterland for weeks at a time. He mapped the coastal plan; he collected reliable statistics about the country; and he became, effectively, the Resident's most knowledgeable Assistant on the Hinterland (3). The Troopers, well-handled by Stevens, learnt to mix with the Yemenis without apparent friction. In 1881, Brigadier F.A.E. Loch eulogised Stevens' achievements; '... the Troop ... has more than answered all expectations; ... the moral effect of the Troop has been great ...' (4).

For this work, troopers were paid Rs13 As5 Ps4 p.m.; they had to buy their own food and clothing and pay Rs50 for their carbines; and if they took leave to India

(1) AAR 1870/71, para 55

(2) p.3.100

(3) AIA 768, Res 70/388 - SGB, 10.4.77

(4) AIA 854 f 229

their sea-passage to Bombay could cost them Rs67. They enlisted for life (1). When European troops spent only 1 year with the garrison (2), and Native troops spent two years, the long local experience of the Aden Troopers was particularly valuable. But, in pennywise fashion, the Government of Bombay refused Stevens a personal allowance of Rs150 p.m., such as Assistant Residents drew after 5 years service in Aden (3). Schneider pointed out that the Troops' quality depended upon its Commandant; that the Commandant's local knowledge and personal influence took time to acquire; that the Commandant had to be carefully picked; and that, with an extra allowance, an officer such as Stevens would have less inducement for returning to a Cavalry regiment in India on promotion (4). The case for the allowance was clear

- (1) AIA 574, Cmdt. Aden Troop - Res, 11.5.73
- (2) L/Mil/7/644-649, Mil Dept's 423 of 28.12.69 by Gov. Gen. in Council - S of S
- (3) AIA 768, SGB - Res, 15.10.77
- (4) AIA 768, Res - SGB, 10.4.77

locally; but to Secretariat officers in Bombay
'... the present conditions of the finances of Bombay
overruled any other arguments ...'. Bombay's was not
a frontier administration, like the Punjaub and its
later N.W.F.P. offshoot. The value of personal relations
was insufficiently understood. Once again, the Aden
administration suffered because conditions were different
and not understood in Bombay.

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Wherever the Aden Troop appeared, its presence
symbolised British interest in local affairs; it
effectively extended British influence along the coastal
plain beyond Aden. It was quickly employed to reassure
the Sultan of Lahej of British support when Ottoman
troops came into Lahej in October, 1873 (1). It was
used in support of Abdali forces in Haushabi territory,
in December, 1873, to persuade the Haushabis to resume

(1) p.3.87 n.1 and n.2

relations with the Residency (1). It was used to watch for Ottoman influence amongst the western Subaihi sections in 1874 (2). The policy was adopted, in 1875, of 'cultivating' friendly tribal relations in previously unfamiliar territory through personal visits by the Commandant (3). But care was taken to avoid involving the Troop in inter-tribal border disputes, such as that between the Abdalis and the Haushabis (2). But when retribution was required, for Yemeni action against British interests, the troop was an effective weapon. In 1881, the Buraimi section of the Subaihis were attacked for a murder near Shaikh Othman. As a result, their Shaikh came in and made peace with the British (4). In 1879, the Troop co-operated with H.M.S. Ready to capture the fratricide father of the Fadhli Sultan at asSarriyah some 80 miles from Aden (5). The same year, a Qotaibi

(1) p3.100

(2) AIA 643 f 601-604, Brigadier Schneider's Memo - Stevens

(3) AIA 728, Res - Stevens, 19.11.75

(4) AAR 81/82, para 4

(5) AAR 78/79, para 9

'customs post' dominating the Dhala Lahej road at Thumair was blown up by engineers escorted by Troopers. The Quotaibis had previously refused to vacate it and to cease collecting tolls.

The first British visit to the Dahla area in the summer of 1880 was made by the Troop (1). Such a patrol was only possible with local goodwill. Even forage for the Troop while on the Dhala plateau had to be sent up from Lahej; and the Troop were operating beyond reach of any support from the Aden garrison. The success of this first patrol to Dhala illustrates the good local relations that Stevens had cultivated, the prestige of the Troop, and possibly the political skill of Major F.M. Hunter. The Troop's reputation extended beyond the Yemen. During operations in Egypt in 1882, the Admiral commanding British Forces at Suez asked for the loan of the Troop (2). Their immediate return from Suez was probably due to General Wolseley's dislike of the

(1) AIA 855, p.445, Stevens' Report

(2) AIA 891 f 15. G of I - Res, tel. 9.9.82

Indian Army (1).

No successor could be expected to handle the Troop as Stevens had done. They lacked his personal experience of the Troopers, of the Yemenis, and of local politics. His successor, Lt. L.A. Gordon, of the 2nd Light Cavalry, had been attached to the Troop on its abortive posting to Suez (2). But the establishment of only one European officer with the Troop was a disadvantage when the Commandant needed to be replaced. Another factor, which may have reduced the Troops' effectiveness, was that Troopers signed on for life. They had grown older and were possibly less willing to endure the discomforts of patrolling far inland with a new, less experienced, and younger, Commandant. Necessarily, the new Commandant was more dependent upon his three Native Officers than Stevens; and later Commandants served for shorter periods. The Troop was still the most mobile part of the Aden garrison. But it no longer had the close contact with

(1) AIA 891 f 308, tel. G of I - Res, 21.9.82.

See Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.172/74

(2) Sinker 'Keith Falconer' p.245

the Yemeni tribesmen; and it was also required from 1884 for use on the Somali Coast. Inexperience of local conditions could be costly. In January, 1890, the Troop lost a Native Officer and 12 Troopers, killed in a Somali ambush (1).

When Residency interest in the Hinterland revived from 1900, proposals were made for a new, tribal, levy. Major General P.J. Maitland realised that local tribesmen would have more understanding of the Yemenis than Indian troopers. The Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay was, privately, sympathetic, although he cautioned patience (2). Such a move was too obvious an indication of a 'forward' policy in the Yemen to be welcome at the India Office, until circumstances proved it necessary. Major H.F. Jacob favoured travelling with tribal levies; and Major General H.M. Mason, himself a cavalryman, suggested that such a force, composed of '... a couple of hundred men ... with a British Inspecting Officer ...',

(1) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.329-331: S.C.A.R. 89/90

(2) AIA C 35 D/O S.W. Edgerley - Brig. P.J. Maitland,
10.3.1904

should replace the Aden Troop (1). But the British withdrawal from Dhala in 1907 prevented this policy being discussed further.

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The local political value of Aden's trade and population growth

In 1865, Aden was an unimportant Indian outpost on the Bombay Suez steamer route, a minor free port (2), and a small, locally uninfluential, town. British influence around the Gulf of Aden was on the decline, following the abolition of the Indian Navy in 1863 and the closure of Aden as a permanent naval station. Yet, within 40 years, imagined threats to Aden's security induced the British Cabinet to warn the Porte not to send urgently-needed reinforcements to the Yemen (3);

(1) AIA File 43/2, Res - SGB, 11.3.06

(2) Graph D

(3) p.9.83 n.1

Aden's trade had increased over 6-fold (1); steamer tonnage using the harbour (2) had increased from under 250,000 tons in 1867/68 to nearly 3,000,000 tons in 1905/06 (3); and Aden's population had roughly doubled (4). The population increase was due to the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, to new telegraph links between India and Europe in 1870 (5), to the development of steamships at the expense of sailing vessels (3), to increasing commercial opportunities, and the political stability and security in Aden, and to other factors. The immigrants included growing numbers of Indian, Arab, Somali, and a few European traders and businessmen, and artisans and labourers from the Indian Ocean countries.

Aden's trade was mainly in non-British hands; and Aden's population was swelled by temporary, Arab and

(1) Graph D

(2) Diagram C

(3) Graph B

(4) Graph E

(5) E.g. AIA 532, Res - SGB, 4.3.70

Somali, immigrant labourers, used to ~~a~~ low living standards, and readily augmented on demand from the Yemeni and Somali Interiors. The population of Aden throughout this period was a racially mixed one, giving no community an absolute majority. In 1872, there were 8,241 Arabs, 5,346 Africans (mainly Somalis, but including freed slaves), 3,589 Indians, 1,435 Jews and 209 Europeans (1). In general, the Jewish community had a balanced mixture of men and women; many Somali women also came, like their men, as immigrants, so that their community was more nearly balanced (2) than either the Arabs, or the Europeans. Aden was thus a foreign enclave on the Yemen coast.

Aden was valued, throughout the region, as a market for buying necessities and local luxuries, and for selling local produce, as well as for the employment it offered. Local communities suffered if they, or

(1) Census Figures, 21.2.72. The 'Europeans' included one U.S. citizen

(2) AIA 853. Census figures, 1881, 4,079 African women to 5,058 men

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their produce, or their shipping, were banned from entering Aden, as a punishment for behaviour which the Aden Residency disapproved of. Even if trade was not banned, Somali, Yemeni, Hadhrami or Mahri tribesmen whose tribes had offended the Residency could only enter Aden at some personal risk of imprisonment. There was only the one land entrance to the peninsula and the one landing stage at Maala for coastal shipping. Even the building of Shaikh Othman, from 1882, made little difference. The village population was not large and strangers were readily discernible. So, while the divided local populations might suffer discomfort if barred from Aden, after 1867, the British were not dependent upon any one area for local supplies. From 1881, a determined British effort was made to restrict the Aden peninsula population. In 10 years 7,000 people were compulsorily moved to Shaikh Othman and 8,000 were deported (1). Such considerations strengthened the position of the Residency staff in dealing with

(1) AAR 1890/91, para 4

immigrants or with tribal leaders. The latter, too, were impressed by the growth in the shipping visiting Aden, and by the growth in Aden's trade, as evidence of British power. At least half the shipping was British (1), throughout the period; but to many of the local visitors, who did not distinguish between the different European nations, all European shipping was 'English'.

Until the French arms trade developed at Djibouti, during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the Residency was able, also, to impose a virtual embargo on the commercial import of arms from Europe into the Yemen and into Somali territory. Only Yemeni tribal leaders favoured by the British were able to obtain modern rifles, and ammunition, for their personal use or for their immediate supporters; and, along the entire coastline of the Gulf of Aden, local British naval blockades were applied, on occasions, at the bidding of the Resident. Britain's prestige was high,

(1) Graph A .

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partly because of the absence of effective foreign commercial, naval, and political competition in the area. That came slowly, with the growth of the French position on the Dankali Somali Coast, and with the Italian establishment of Assab, in the last decade and a half of the century.

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The appointment of Aden Residents

The Indian Government's staffing of the Aden Residency gives an impression of indifference to Aden's peculiar needs, and even to the best means of protecting British interests throughout the region. In forty years, Aden had 11 substantive, and 1 officiating, Residents (1). Many other officers acted for varying periods, often whilst the Residents were away on leave, sick, or on duty elsewhere. Four Residents were promoted on leaving

(1) Diagram B

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Aden (1). The remainder were retired on leaving Aden, or shortly afterwards, justifying H.F. Jacob's jibe that Aden suffered from being considered to be a convenient post for otherwise unemployed Generals (2). Only Maj. Gen. C.W. Tremenheere had had previous military experience in Aden, as the Assistant Engineer, in 1846-47. None of his successors had previously served in political posts, administering a territory. Ideally, the post required an active, adaptable man, not more than forty (3). Most appointees were in their fifties; some were older; and only Major W. Merewether was as young. Some appointees found the post unattractive; Maj. Gen. E. de Brath tried to avoid the posting, because it gave no experience in exercising a brigade of troops and so possibly damaged his chances of promotion to Divisional Command (4). While Brigadier

(1) Only G. O'Moore Creagh became a full General and C. in C., India

(2) Jacob 'Kings' p.63

(3) MP, M968, Lord Lamington Gov. Bo. - Lord Minto, 1.3.06

(4) MP, M968, de Brath - P.S. to Viceroy, 7.3.06

A.G.P. Hogg complained that his entertainment allowance of Rs 250 p.m. covered less than half the cost of his official entertaining; that essential new Residency furniture, a carriage and horses, cost him Rs 12,000; and that his daily travelling allowance of Rs 10 barely covered the cost of hiring half the 20 baggage camels he required on tour (1). Such complaints produced little result. General de Brath came and received no later promotion. Brigadier Hogg received no increases in his allowances. The Indian tax payer was not to be taxed for '... proposals, however desirable in themselves ...', which local revenue in Aden, or in Somaliland, could not meet (2).

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The First Assistant Resident

When Residents were previously unfamiliar with

(1) AIA 985, Res - SGB, 20.4.86

(2) AIA 1086, Bo Resolution No 5656 of 10.9.90, signed
by W. Lee-Warner

Aden, could speak little or no Arabic, and when none stayed longer than 5 years, and some stayed barely 2 years, the post of First Assistant Resident was, potentially, a locally influential one (1). From 1874-1896, four officers held the substantive post, providing a continuity that was conspicuously absent later (1). Of these four, F.M. Hunter was the most influential. He intervened in 1881 to end the Kasadi Quaiti fighting (2); he secured the cession of Shaikh Othman to Britain in 1882 (3); and he virtually 'engineered' the British occupation of the Somali Coast between 1884-85 (4). He also secured local agreement to the Protectorate Treaties with Somali and South Arabian tribes between 1884-88, which secured British influence over the shores of the Gulf of Aden and kept out foreign political competition. Hunter owed much to Salih Jaffer, the Residency Interpreter (5), but Hunter's

(1) Diagram: B

(2) p.4.81 n.1 and 4.82 n.2

(3) p.7.5 - 7.23

(4) p.6.53 n.1 and 6.34 - 6.78

(5) p.10.50 n.1

success was due to his tact and diplomacy. His length of service in Aden was probably an increasing asset; Hunter had time to develop his local friendships and acquaintanceships; he had practical and personal experience of the prominent tribesmen who visited Aden; and he had visited many of their countries. He knew, through Salih Jaffer, the personal relationships of loyalty, jealousy and enmity which motivated tribal, and intertribal, politics. He was 'in touch' with the Yemen, Hadhramaut and the Somali Coast. He personified 'the Government' (1).

That Government was popular, because it made no financial demands upon the Arab or Somali tribesmen, except as a punishment for interference with international shipping, or with land trade routes, or for murders within British territory or of British subjects. Unlike the Ottomans and the Egyptians, the British, in theory, did not intervene in tribal affairs and took no taxes. In practice, the British seldom interfered and were

(1) Cf. Belhaven 'Kingdom of Melchior' p.186, London, 1949.
(Hereafter Belhaven 'Melchior')

relatively generous in their public expenditure for entertaining tribal visitors, and for presents (1). This won Hunter and Salih Jaffer local appreciation (2). A little money, a small present, or hospitality in Aden were much appreciated at small cost by a hinterland population which had little money in circulation, living mainly by barter and on a subsistence economy.

'Hunter was a Liberal in politics. Annexation did not commend itself to him: he would pacify the adjoining territories by extending British influence and trade, without increasing British responsibilities, and would act so as to inspire confidence in the native mind, while showing the benefits of a British alliance ...' (3). Hunter was opposed to the extension of British military garrisons, and officers, to the Somali Coast, because

- (1) AIA 833 f 66 para 4. By 1880, the Residency Interpreter was looking after over 1,000 visitors annually
- (2) E.g. L/P&S/10/15. Copy of undated letter from Shaikh Abdul Kawi - Res Aden, received 29.1.06, referring to Hunter and Salih Jaffer, and their habitual presents to him.
- (3) Jacob 'Kings' p.138, quoting a letter of Hunter's

foreign troops provided a target for opponents of the British connection, and because of the extra expenses (1). In raising in Aden a 40-strong police nucleus for the future Somali police force, Hunter showed foresight, local understanding, and confidence in his own judgement (2). He backed that judgement to the limit when he sent L.P. Walsh to Berbera in August, 1884, without authority. It was probably a courageous gamble for a married man with a family and no private means, apart from an earned entitlement to a £250 retirement pension (3). This action showed that Hunter was prepared to do his duty, as he saw that duty, regardless of the damaging personal consequences of failure, or of official rejection of his action. Possibly he was influenced by the earlier examples of Brigadier Sir W.M. Coghlan in occupying Perim in 1857 (4), and of Major W. Merewether attacking the Fadhlis in 1865 (5), without authority to

(1) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.211 and p.272/273

(2) p.6.36 n.1

(3) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.100

(4) IOL P.D. D/O Corr. June 62 - July 73, Coghlan - Kay, 13.12.62

(5) p.2.16 n.3

do so. Their actions were successful and they were condoned, although they were contrary to official policy.

Some of Hunter's contemporaries understood that Hunter, on occasions, deliberately acted without forewarning his superiors of his intentions - because his reasons for action, or his methods, would not have been approved in advance. Thus, in 1888, he used Irregulars to apply military pressure, for political ends, on the Jibril Aboker section of the Issa Somalis (1). There was a justification for military action; the Issa had been raiding caravans coming to Bulhar; but Hunter wished to demonstrate British power over the Issa to prevent French influence increasing amongst the tribe through the French Consul at Zeila. He achieved his ends; but he may have hastened his posting to India since Brigadier Hogg was anxious for Hunter to be transferred and he favoured more orthodox military measures (2).

(1) Walsh 'Somali Coast' p.275-278

(2) AIA 985 D/O Res - a correspondent in the Foreign Department (name illegible), 6.7.86.

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Salih Jaffer, Residency Interpreter

Salih Jaffer, the son of Captain S.B. Haines' interpreter, Mullah Jaffer, was born in 1836. Salih was brought up in Aden. His father was dismissed from Government service in 1843, following charges made against him by the Mansab of Aden. Haines supported Mullah Jaffer, but the Bombay Government insisted upon the Interpreter's dismissal (1). Mullah Jaffer remained in Aden, carrying on private business. Salih described his father as '... a respectable and wealthy man of Aden ...' (2). The Reverend G.P. Badger, Chaplain at Aden from 1846 - 1862, preferred the description 'rogue' (3). Badger was, however, a firm supporter and friend of Jaffer's enemy, the Mansab. Salih entered Government service in 1854, as a clerk in the Resident's

(1) Waterfield 'Sultans of Aden' p.192

(2) AIA 728 f 1217, Statement by Salih Jaffer in 1876

(3) AIA 560, Rev. G. Badger - Res, 2.3.71

Court at Crater, '... at ... [his] mother's earnest request ..., not for the sake of gain, for ... [he] had enough, but purely [for] gaining knowledge ...' (1). Salih's father was then dead.

Salih was unique; he was locally brought up and privately educated when Aden still had no European school. As a consequence, Aden's other administrative staff, outside the Qadhis's office, were drawn from Britain or from India, without any previous acquaintance with Aden. Salih spoke Arabic, English, Hindustani and Somali. But, still more important, Salih understood, and had grown up with Arabs and Somalis. Such an understanding, if it was ever attained by foreigners, needed years of local experience. This experience of Salih's was of the greatest advantage to the Residency from 1870 - 1885; it contributed to preserving British hegemony in the Gulf of Aden, despite challenges by the Ottomans and the French. As the only official fluent Arabic writer, Salih was employed to assist the acting First Assistant, Captain G.R. Goodfellow,

(1) p.10.44 n.2

with the Residency Arabic correspondence in 1867, when Mr. Hormuzd Rassam, the Interpreter, had been sent to Abyssinia in 1864 (1).

In 1866/67, the Residency staff was heavily involved in preparations for the Abyssinian campaign of 1867/68. The Residency staff were extremely busy, yet Goodfellow only enlisted Salih's help '... much against his [own] inclination ...' (1). Goodfellow did not elaborate his objections. Possibly Goodfellow had been prejudiced against Salih by Badger and by the previous Resident, Brigadier W.M. Coghlan. Goodfellow favoured the appointment of a 'vernacular clerk', recruited from India, as an Interpreter, '... a respectable and trustworthy man ...' rather than '... any native Gentleman specially appointed for this duty ...', as Hormuzd Rassam had been. In Goodfellow's view, '... Government might be inclined to look upon [such an Interpreter] ... as an Assistant to the Resident, which he could never be in anything but the native correspondence ...'.

(1) AIA 533, Goodfellow - Res, 18.11.68

Salih Jaffer's later career proved Goodfellow to be mistaken. Salih was appointed Residency Interpreter by Bombay Resolution No. 503 of 15.2.1870 (1).

Salih was closely involved with the Abdali chief from 1866, when the latter appointed him as his Aden agent instead of the Maṇṣab of Aden (2). In 1867, Salih also became the Fadhli chief's Aden agent. These roles were incompatible with Salih's position as a Government employee. But the position was condoned by successive Residents, who knew that Salih drew the chiefs' stipends from the Treasury, because the arrangement was convenient to the Chiefs and to the Residency. In 1876, Salih ceased to act as the Chiefs' Aden agent, because the Bombay Government had learnt of his additional, unorthodox, roles (2).

Salih probably worked as Residency Interpreter because he enjoyed the local prestige which his work gave him. He was promoted Native Assistant, but his pay

(1) AIA 533 f 563

(2) AIA 728, Res - SGB, 20.11.76

was still only Rs 300 p.m., in 1881 (1); the Government of India refused to sanction even a personal allowance of Rs 100 p.m., which Brigadier Loch proposed (2).

Salih's personal fortune was mostly property, inherited from his father, and it was estimated at Rs 200,000 in 1876 (3). He employed his own clerk to deal with his private affairs. By local standards, Salih was wealthy (4).

There were suspicions of his honesty, and he admitted some minor misdemeanours in 1876, when he was accused of corruption by the Abdali chief and by other locals (5).

It is possible that Salih neglected action which he should have taken because of the pressure of his work, because of personal vanity, and even because he felt himself entitled to additional rewards for the unofficial work which he did. He had broken Government regulations,

(1) AIA 854, G of I Resolution 3042 of 7.7.81

(2) AIA 854, Res - SGB, 3.1.81

(3) AIA 728 f 1217

(4) Hunter 'Aden' p.39

(5) AIA 728 f 1165 and f 1158

but, in doing so, he had not been shown as misappropriating Government funds. His standard of acceptable behaviour was a local one; and Salih admitted that '... as an Arab he [sometimes] could not see things in the same light as Government did ...' (1). He spoke English; he understood the British, but he had not been educated to accept their standards of morality.

Salih had been recommended '... without hesitation ...' for the post of Interpreter by Major General E. Russell(2); and Russell claimed to have observed Salih's work carefully. Hunter, who had worked closely with Salih from 1871, testified in 1876 that; '... Mr. Saleh Jaffer has established for himself a name for honesty and upright dealing with the surrounding Arab tribes - He is very shrewd and intelligent and above all he is a faithful servant of the British Government and may be fully trusted in any emergency to give every assistance even though in so doing he might be acting in conflict

(1) AIA 728 f 1160, Res - SGB, 20.11.76

(2) AIA 533, Res - SGB, 17.12.69

with his religious feelings and his family ties ...' (1).
Schneider accepted that Salih's misdemeanours justified
a 'rating' in 1876, but felt that that lesson '... would
secure us a really faithful servant for the future and
one whose place it would be most difficult to supply
...' (2). Schneider recommended Salih to his successor
as '... thoroughly trustworthy ...' (3). Loch paid
tribute to Salih's 'long, zealous and faithful
services' (4); and Salih was awarded the title of Khan
Bahadur by the Indian Government, in recognition of his
services, on 11th August 1884 (5).

Salih was accessible to a wide cross-section of
the region's population; they called on him at
home (6); they wrote to him, giving news and expressing
their views, from as far afield as Dhofar (7). His

(1) AIA 854 f 214

(2) AIA 723, Res - SGB, 20.11.76

(3) AIA 854, Memo by Schneider left for Loch, May 1877

(4) AIA 854, Res - SGB, 3.1.81

(5) AAR 84/85 para 9

(6) AIA 728 f 1221, Statement by Salih, in November 1876

(7) E.g. 5.21 n.2

information was not always accurate about the remoter areas, but he could provide more information about local situations than any European officer. He, and his son, Muhammad, kept the Residency in touch with local affairs (1). He was a pragmatist, who could make himself agreeable to his contemporaries. R.N. officers praised his '... courteous and ready assistance ...' (2), and they gave him passages in H.M. warships which were usually offered only to European officers (3). He was sent to Mecca in 1880 to discover '... all he could regarding the Sharif of Mecca and the country generally, which duty Mr. Saleh Jaffer has performed most satisfactorily ...' (4). He socialised with Redhwan Pasha, the Egyptian Governor of Berbera, to learn what progress the French and Italians were making

- (1) L/P&S/10, File 758/1908, Brig. P.J. Maitland - SGB,
10.5.03
- (2) AIA 827 f 167 - f 173, Commander Berners, R.N. -
Brig. F.A.E. Loch, Dec. 1880
- (3) AIA 827, Res - Cmdr. Berner, R.N., 4.12.80
- (4) AIA 854, Res - SGB, 3.1.81

on the Egyptian-claimed Somali-Dankali coast (1). He was sent, briefly, to the R.N. Admiral in command at Suez, in 1882, as an Intelligence Officer (2). He was invaluable; and from 1870, until his death on 18.2.1885, Salih took only five months leave (3). Salih died aged 49; the probable cause of his death was a cerebral aneurysm (4); and he was young, by medical standards, when he had his first attack of hemiplegia in 1880 (3)(4). His original stroke, and later death, cannot, however, be attributed directly to overwork (4).

Most Residents depended upon their First Assistants, even as Assistant Residents relied heavily upon the Residency Interpreter and Native Assistant, until

- (1) BSC PS Vol 6 f 971, Res - SGB, 13.6.79, enclosed a copy of Salih's Report (f 981)
- (2) AIA 924, AAR 1882/83, 29.6.82 - 20.7.82
- (3) AIA 833, Sick Report of 16.4.80 granted sick leave; and AAR 82/83, para 8, recorded 2 months 20 days privilege leave
- (4) Note by Dr. N. Malcolm, M.B., B.Ch., M.R.C.P., D.T.M.H., Assistant Health Adviser, Aden 1956-1960 and Registrar, Aden Hospital, 1962-64, dated 20.4.1971

Muhammad Salih Jaffer's dismissal for corruption in 1900, when the post was abolished. Personal relations were always extremely important. Brigadier Hogg arranged Hunter's transfer to India in 1889, because he resented Hunter's position as the regional expert (1).

Brigadier Cunningham refused Captain Davies' proposed return to Aden; and L.P. Walsh failed to secure the appointment as First Assistant, in 1897, which he expected (2). That was possibly because he was an uncovenanted officer, had served most of his eleven years Residency service on the Somali Coast, and was critical of some Indian Army attitudes towards the Somali Coast administration. But, whatever Walsh's faults and vanities, it was the Residency's loss that there was no continuity of service in the post of First Assistant from 1897 (3); and that many of the Residency staff from 1897 appear to have lacked the character, adaptability, and possibly attachment to Aden, that

(1) p.10.43 n.2

(2) AIA C/10 D/O, Lt. Harrington - Lt. Col. W.B. Ferris,
1.11.95

(3) Diagram B

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gave their predecessors closer local contact (1). As a result, much authority was concentrated in the hands of Muhammad Salih Jaffer, the Native Assistant. Brigadier G. O'Moore Creagh castigated Muhammad for 'the appalling swindling' in the administration, dismissed him, and exiled some of his relatives to the Somali Coast. But H.M. Abud implied later, in support of G.W. Bury, questionably dismissed for 'accepting bribes' in 1904, that the Abdali chief's self-interest, and local intrigue, were partly responsible for Muhammad's downfall and for the charges against Bury (2). Creagh expressed a strong personal prejudice against Muhammad, '... an evil-looking rascal of mixed Arab and Persian origin ...'; and he mentioned specifically that Muhammad's relations with the chiefs were poor (3). Creagh's own relations with the Abdali chief were particularly good (4). It is probable that

(1) H.F. Jacob and H.M. Abud are obvious exceptions

(2) IOL File 758/1908

(3) Creagh 'Autobiography' p.211

(4) Creagh 'Autobiography' p.216 and p.218

any failings on Muhammad's part were equalled by as much weakness in the organisation of the administration. That was the responsibility of the Government of Bombay and of the Foreign Department.

Conclusion

The only previous, detailed, historical study of part of this area and period was T.A.Marston's 'Britain's Imperial Role in the Red Sea Area, 1800 - 1878' (1).

Marston wrote under considerable disadvantages. He worked from the Foreign Office Records, for the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation of 1873, believing wrongly (2) that Aden dispatches from 1872 - 1877 were generally passed to the Foreign Office by the India Office.

Marston wrote many years after doing his research in London; he did not know the area; and there are many inaccuracies in recording names (3). When Marston worked from the Foreign Office files he obtained a distorted view of Anglo-Yemeni relations (4), and a view of Anglo-Ottoman attitudes in 1873 that was naturally (2) heavily

(1) Connecticut, U.S.A. 1962. (Hereafter Marston 'Red Sea')

(2) p.3.43 n.3 and p.3.43 - p.3.44

(3) e.g. Marston 'Red Sea' p.446 Dhala was not the 'Amiri' "capital", p.447 'Muhammad Musaed, a brother [sic cousin] of Ali ibn Mukbil'. p.450 Schneider talked to both Kathiri [sic Kasadi] and Ka'iti'.

(4) Cf Ibid p.395 with 2.

prejudiced against the Ottomans. This latter view reflected India Office arguments to the Foreign Office in favour of strong British pressure to counter alleged Ottoman 'provocations' and 'aggression'.

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The initiatives for local British expansion originated at the Aden Residency; and, therefore, the Residency records have particular significance in studying this expansion. Aden files contain original, uncorrected, draft letters for despatch abroad (1), local correspondence and Residency Memos and Reports (2), and marginal comments on incoming mail, for Residency information only (3). There are declarations of personal views by Residency staff (4); there are expressions of local attitudes (5); and there

(1) E.G. 2.54 n.1

(2) E.g. 2.47 n.2 and p.2.50 lines 11 - 15

(3) E.g. p.9.14 n.1

(4) E.g. p.9.13 n.1

(5) E.g. p.8.27 n.1

are details of what was actually happening (1). On controversial issues, material unfavourable to the Residency arguments (2), or to the conduct of the Resident (3), or to future Residency intentions (4), were sometimes withheld from Bombay or from the Foreign Department. Unfortunately, Aden Residency records are not complete; and some are damaged. But, the Aden Records still show much that cannot be discovered from India Office, or from Foreign Office, Records. At times, there is significance in what is omitted, or in surprising delays in reporting action (5). These Aden records had not previously been used in any detailed historical study, apart from R.J.Gavin's brief study of the capture of Aden (6).

(1) p.8.26 n.2

(2) E.g. p.8.27 n.1

(3) p. 2.54 n.1

(4) E.g. p.9.13 n.1

(5) E.g. p.7.18 n.1 and n.2

(6) Submitted to the Government of Aden when Gavin was employed in the Aden Archives. I have not referred to his later work, because my researches and the original drafts were completed before the publication of 'Aden, 1839-1967', London, 1974.

The earlier records in the Aden Archives were neglected by later Aden administrators; even a retired Governor of Aden, with considerable local service, and ready access to the Archives, could be ill-informed about Aden's earlier history (1). Ingrams, as a senior officer, humorously recognised his ignorance of the origins of the Fadhli Yafai dispute, recorded in the files, when he was required to mediate between the tribes (2). Aden authorities were ill-informed about the earlier material in their Archives, so it is perhaps not surprising that accepted myths about past history in the region were never queried at the India Office or at the Foreign Office. That resulted in a consistently unsympathetic British attitude towards Ottoman claims in the area.

The files of the India, and of the Foreign Offices, like those of the Aden Residency, were casually kept by present-day standards. Thus the Foreign Office file

(1) E.g. Sir Tom Hickinbotham 'Aden', London, 1958, (published within a year of his retirement), p.60-61, c.f. with p.3.63 - 3.104, allowing for a misprint of '1872' for '1873' in 'Aden'

(2) Ingrams 'Arabia' p.113-114, c.f. with p.2.72-2.74

dealing with the Yemen crisis of 1873 (1) has no index, which would be particularly useful for later reference, no copies of India Office papers sent 'for information and return', and no cross-referencing to correspondence within the same or in other files. The India Office filing was no better; and India Office files were awkward because correspondence on Aden matters was filed in general, not subject, files, for much of this period. Useful supplementary information during the crisis of 1873, and during the Boundary Demarcation of 1902-05 (2), is available in the private papers of officials then in India and in London.

In the absence of private papers of Residency officials, the contemporary accounts of personal attitudes and of local happenings, described in 'popular' books written by Aden officials in their retirement, help to illustrate what was achieved, and the circumstances in which that was done. L.P. Walsh's 'Under the Flag and

(1) PRO FO 78/2753

(2) The Aden files contain much demi-official correspondence of, and to, the Officiating Resident during the Boundary Demarcation.

Somali Coast Stories' provides corroboration of Hunter's unique role in the British occupation of the Somali Coast (1). H.F.Jacob in 'Kings of Arabia' confirmed the over rated importance given to the Amir of Dhala by the British Boundary Commissioners and by the officiating Resident (2). So did R.A.B.Hamilton (Lord Belhaven) in the 'Uneven Road'; he denied that the Shairis were independent, but implied that Jacob had considered the Amir to be less than suzerain over them (3). Hamilton's judgement on the Shairis shows the natural acceptance by a serving officer of government policy (4). But Hamilton, who worked closely with Thabit Qassim alQotaibi, recognised that the Amir had no influence over the Qotaibis, one of the Amir's tribes in Residency eyes (5). Hamilton also pointed out the

(1) E.g. p.6.39 ns 1 and 2.

(2) Jacob 'Kings' p.81.

(3) Belhaven 'Road' p.159.

(4) Ibid p.180.

(5) Ibid p.136.

British error in making a treaty with Sharif Ahmad Mohsin of Beihan (1), on the Officiating Resident's initiative (2); and Hamilton exposed G.W.Bury's invention of a tribal night attack on Bury's journey to Beihan (3). Bury did exaggerate, according to Colonel R. Meinertzhagen, who still wrote of him with respect (4). But Bury's account of contemporary conditions in the Yemen is valuable for comparison with official reports from Aden. Bury was sympathetic to the Yemenis (5) ; and he knew local conditions better than any official.

The criticisms by General Sir G.O'Moore Creagh of weaknesses in the selection of military officers for service in the Indian Civil (6), and of the Aden

(1) R.A.B.Hamilton (Lord Belhaven) 'Kingdom of Melchior'
London, 1949, p.73.

(2) p.9.106 ns 2 & 3.

(3) Belhaven 'Road' p.80-81 and Bury 'Uz' p.237-239.

(4) Meinertzhagen 'Birds' p.360 & p.579.

(5) Meinertzhagen 'Birds' p.579.

(6) Creagh 'Autobiography' p.80.

Administration (1), were frank. Creagh admitted, too, his own willingness to use effective, but unorthodox, measures (2). Creagh was prejudiced by his own experiences; he wrote particularly favourably of the Abdali chief, Ahmad bin Fadhl (3). But all contemporary records may be coloured by their recorder's impressions, limited by ~~their~~^{his} knowledge, and sometimes selective, because of their author's purpose in writing them. Official records are not immune to these failings. There were skeletons in senior officers' cupboards. Creagh admitted a minor one of his own (2).

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It may be suggested that disproportionate importance is given to the reminiscences of Bury, Creagh, Jacob, and Walsh; and that there is insufficient evidence to show that the collective mentality of the Aden Residency, and the attitudes of individual officials,

(1) Creagh 'Autobiography' p.211.

(2) Ibid p.212-213

(3) Ibid p.216 and p.218

were important influences in shaping British policy in, and around, the Gulf of Aden. But a study of the Aden records shows that there was a very strong parochial loyalty at the Residency; that there was, often, an Aden 'party line', quite distinct from the official policy favoured by the Bombay Secretariat, or approved by the Foreign Department. Opinions at the Residency changed, because a strong Resident might impose his views, despite the experience of his Assistants, while Residents of weaker personality, or less interested in local affairs, might be guided by a knowledgeable First Assistant. But the view of Gulf of Aden affairs from the Aden Residency generally favoured more active intervention in local affairs than was considered at Bombay or than was acceptable at the Foreign Department. It is unfortunate that contemporary opinions in letters have not been available from local Arabian and Somali sources to give more insight into the history of the period as seen through local eyes (1).

(1) Some material was previously available until 1967 in the local records of stipendiary chiefs in South Arabia.

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The development of British influence in and around the Gulf of Aden depended upon the Aden Residency staff, not upon any plans or foresight at the Foreign Department or in the India Office. The initiatives for action came usually from the Residency, but they required the later endorsement, or the support, of the Foreign Department, and sometimes, of the India Office. Only, in the case of the Anglo-Ottoman Boundary Commission, did the Ottoman request for a demarcation come from the Foreign Office. The Officiating Resident was, however, already interested in the disputed area, and the Ottoman request was a response to the earlier British initiative at ~~ad~~ Dareja (1). The Resident's conduct, no less than the British Boundary Commissioners', resulted in a considerable expansion of territory at Ottoman expense. But it is arguable that little expansion of British influence occurred, once the Political Officer at Dhala was withdrawn in 1906.

At each ~~p~~eriod of expansion, in 1873 in the Yemen, in 1881 in Hadhramaut, and in 1884-1886 on the Somali

(1) p.9.1 - 9.2

Coast, and between 1902-1905 in the Yemen, the Indian authorities received strong support from the Secretary of State for India (1). On these occasions, the Foreign Office view was conciliatory and moderate. Without such strong India Office support it is possible that more moderate counsels might have prevailed at London, and ^{that} British expansion in Southern Arabia or on the Somali Coast would have been more restricted. The erratic expansion of British territorial claims in the area, which had begun in 1839, came to an end in 1905, with minor exceptions (2).

British expansion was erratic because it occurred only when local opportunities were exploited by the Residency staff; and since the senior staff were few in number, attention to one area diverted the Residency's resources away from other areas. Thus from 1884-1898, South Arabian affairs were largely overshadowed by the

(1) With occasional limited reservations on Lord George Hamilton's part in 1902-03.

(2) The Audhali treaty in 1913 and the later definitions of the 'Beihani', 'Quaiti' and Mahri borders.

needs of the Somali Coast. That coast was more attractive for other reasons. The country was easier to travel in, the ill-armed population was easier to influence, less tribally fragmented than in the Southern Yemen and Hadhramaut, and the Somalis came to look to the British as possible protectors against aggressive Shoon expansion at Somali expense. By contrast, the better armed Yemenis, and Hadhramis, in contact with the Residency, often did not want British intervention in local affairs, when there was no external enemy. In addition there was a direct, though numerically small, British administration on the Somali Coast, while there was no direct British administration in Arabia, outside Aden.

Aden Residency influence probably rose to its peak between 1873 and 1888, because of the quality, the qualifications, and the length of service, of the Residency staff. Schneider, Hunter, probably Salih Jaffer . . . , and, to a lesser extent, Stevens (of the

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Aden Troop) and Walsh, were mainly responsible for that growth. Following Salih Jaffer's death, and Hunter's transfer, after disagreements with Resident Hogg (1), the Aden Residency's influence probably declined from 1888-1898, under Hogg, Jopp and Cunningham, as had happened under Russell and Tremenheere after Merewether's Residency (2). But there was a marked improvement when Brigadier G. O'Moore Creagh became Resident.

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Merewether enlarged the base for local British influence which Commander S.B.Haines had laid by capturing Aden in 1839; Frere and Schneider secured Merewether's gains in 1873; and Schneider extended them in the Yemen and on the Hadhramaut Coast between 1873-1877. Hunter, as First Assistant Resident, continued to consolidate the British position, by securing Shaikh Othman in 1881-82, by imposing an

(1) p.10.43 n.2

(2) See ~~Diagram~~ B for details of their service

unauthorised military solution to the Quaiti-Kasadi feud in Hadhramaut in 1881, and by establishing the British succession to Egyptian rule on the Somali Coast from 1884. Curzon, Maitland, Wahab and Fitzmaurice were responsible for a nominal British expansion in the Yemen from 1901-1905.

Once British involvement in South Arabian tribal politics occurred, the local pattern of tribal power was distorted. The major local beneficiary from the Anglo Fadhli conflict of 1865-1867 was the Abdali chiefly family. They were saved from possible absorption into the expanding Fadhli tribal confederation and enabled to expand at their neighbour's expense. But, as the personal wealth of the Abdali chiefly family grew, from exploiting the local agricultural potential for supplying Aden, and from taxing the transit trade, the Abdalis had an increasing vested interest in a continuing British presence in the area to keep the Ottomans out. The British did not, however, control the Abdalis, or their other tribal clients, even where those clients were recognised by the Resident as behaving

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inequitably towards their neighbours. The British claim to 'control' the coastal area, thus keeping out rival Powers, depended upon the British Protected Chiefs remaining 'in power'. After Protectorate Treaties had been concluded along the South Arabian Coast, from 1886, Indian officials found it expedient to support 'legitimate' rulers, and their heirs, because they represented the sole basis for the British claim to exclude other Powers from South Arabia.

Residency officials knew that the Quaiti chiefs' 'authority', from 1882, from Burum eastwards towards Museinaa was a myth; that the Hadhrami tribes did not recognise Quaiti suzerainty; and that the Quaiti chief could not exercise any effective control outside the garrisoned coastal ports. Other Treaty Chiefs also lacked control of their areas. Therefore, the South Arabian chiefs could not guarantee foreign travellers' safety, nor protect foreign commercial interests, outside their home villages or towns. But only an effective British quarantine of South Arabia, preventing European access, could avoid exposing the limitations of British

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influence and of the 'Chiefs'' control over 'their' tribesmen. An alternative - British administration - was suggested by the Kasadi Naqib at Mukalla. It was rejected, possibly because there was no prospect of local taxation meeting the cost of administration; and because there was no way in which a British involvement on the coast could be insulated from possible conflict with tribes further inland.

Any officially approved expansion into an unfamiliar area involved unknown military, financial, and staff, commitments. The Government of India had no surplus resources available for questionable gambles in Arabia or on the Somali Coast. The Home Government had no interest in either area. It therefore required Lt.Col. F.M.Hunter's exceptional foresight and skills to plan, and to achieve, the British occupation of the Somali Coast. For, once British prestige was apparently committed to a forward policy, withdrawal, particularly under foreign pressure, was difficult. Hunter, and his contemporaries who expanded British influence in the area, had to be opportunists (1).

(1) Cf. Cromer 'Egypt' II p.284. Cromer stressed this need for Anglo-Egyptian officials; but it applied more strongly to succesful Aden Residency officials.

They might enjoy the private support of their superiors, but there could be no planned expansion without the approval of the Home Government. Such approval was unlikely; and even when it was obtained for the purchase of Shaikh Othman, subsequent arbitrary delays occurred. Further, once a proposal for expansion had been rejected by the Home Government, any limited local freedom of action for such a move was lost, so there had to be no premature disclosure of Residency intentions.

Circumstances particularly favoured Hunter in 1884; as Consul for the Somali Coast he was under the British Consul-General in Cairo for Somali Coast affairs, and not under the Resident in Aden. In the negotiations in 1884 between the India and Foreign Offices, Hunter's proposals for the Somali Coast received the support of the Secretary of State for India, while the Foreign Secretary accepted Hunter's recommendations forwarded through Sir Evelyn Baring. Baring did not indicate his dependence on Hunter and the India Office probably did not realise it. Conveniently for Hunter, Lord Ripon, as Viceroy, rejected Indian responsibility for the

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management of Somali Coast affairs in the transitional period. Hunter was, initially, left to establish an administration, effectively free of control by either Baring or the Foreign Department, for an 'independent' Somali Coast, to be governed in the interests of the Somalis themselves.

Possibly, Hunter might have been less successful if he had not had an unorthodox civil servant to hand in L.P. Walsh. Walsh wanted political work; he had earlier worked under Hunter for two years; and, as an uncovenanted officer, he had little prospect of a permanent political appointment, except on the Somali Coast. He was physically tough, unmarried, able to adapt to Somali Coast conditions, and anxious to prove himself in a rôle that mixed administration and soldiering. Walsh, also, was prepared to adopt practical measures, suitable for local situations, with the minimum regard for official regulations which were designed for more orthodox, peaceful, situations. The combination of Hunter and Walsh was probably the best that could have been obtained; and, by comparison with Hunter and Walsh's personal local assets, the French consular officers on the Somali Coast were newcomers, unfamiliar with the area and more closely associated, originally, with the Somalis'

Dankali enemies than with the neighbouring Issa Somalis. The achievement of occupying the coast from Zeila eastwards, against French competition, was Hunter's, shared by Walsh. It was not due to the Indian Government; and it was not due to either Blair (1) or Hogg as Residents.

The local expansion of British influence between 1865 and 1905 was a remarkable achievement by a few men; it was the more remarkable because official policy was, primarily, to avoid British involvement by land in local affairs. In addition, the appointment of Residents (2), who, mostly, did not previously know the area, or the language, and the scarcity of expatriate staff with long service in the area, sometimes weakened the Aden Residency. "Tot homines tot sententiae."

(1) Except in so far as General Blair took leave most opportunely for Hunter's purposes, leaving Hunter to use Aden's local resources as he considered expedient on the Somali Coast.

(2) Diagram B.

12.1 - 12.12 Maps and
Graphs.

(In back pocket)

- A Nationality of shipping
visiting Aden.
- B Steam, sail and country craft
using Aden.
- C Aden's Trade by Land.
- D Aden's Total Trade.
- E Aden's Population.

Map

- A Area of thesis.
 - B Haines' sketch map of 1839.
 - C Tribal Areas of south central
Yemen.
 - D Tribal Areas of south western
Yemen.
 - E Aden and the nearer tribes.
 - F Anglo Ottoman claims in the
Dhala area, 1902-1903.
 - G The Somali Coast of the Gulf
of Aden.
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(1) India Office Records.

India Office Library, Private Papers (and
Microfilms).

(2) Public Record Office.

Foreign Office and Admiralty Records.

Private Papers.

(3) British Museum.

Private Papers.

(4) National Library of Scotland.

Minto Papers.

(5) Miscellaneous.

II. (i) Printed Documentary Sources.

(ii) Maps.

III Contemporary, and Later, Books of Biography,
History, Reference and Travel.

IV Magazine Articles, etc.

I. MANUSCRIPT SOURCES.

1. India Office Records, India Office Library.

These files may be grouped into four categories:-

- (i) India Office Correspondence from, and to, India.
(Generally L1 in the notes (1)).
- (ii) India Office Correspondence from, and to, Bombay.
(Generally LB or BSC in the notes.)
- (iii) India Office Correspondence from, and to, Aden (2).
(Generally LA in the notes.)
- (iv) Aden Archives files, transferred from Aden in 1967.
(Generally prefixed AIA, for files studied here,
and AF, for files studied in Aden, followed by the
current, or the past, file number, in the notes).

For this thesis, the Aden Archives files (iv) provide the bulk of the source material because the impetus for British expansion originated mainly in Aden.

- (1) Otherwise, the India Office reference is used (e.g. the file no., or P(olitical) and S(ecret), followed by the year of the file, etc.)
- (2) This includes other correspondence from Muscat, Zanzibar, and the Straits Settlements, for much of the period.

The correspondence with India (i), Bombay (ii), and Aden (iii) is therefore of marginal value in following the course of events in the region. Minutes, marginal comments, and other indications in the files of attitudes at the India Office towards regional developments are the particular contributions of the India Office files.

The India Office Records mainly used are classified by the Library under the following groupings:-

L/P and S/6 (1).

Foreign letters received from the Governor General and the Government of India, covering political correspondence with India, up to 1874.

Vols. 9 to Vol. 20A, 1865 to December, 1874.

Foreign letters and Enclosures from India.

Vols. 144 - 158, Jan.1873 - Dec.1874.

(1) P and S = Political and Secret. From, at least 1873, 'Political' letters in this context applied to events in India and 'Secret' letters to events outside India.

Political letters received from Bombay up till 1874.

Vol. 2, 1863 - 1866.

Vols. 4 - 10, 1871 - Dec. 1874, have indexes.

Political Despatches sent to India 1858 - 1874.

Vols. 8 - 17, 1865 - Dec. 1874. Volumes 16
and 17 have indexes.

Collections to Indian Political Despatches.

Vols. 75 - 143A, 1865 - 1874.

Political Despatches sent to Bombay, 1858 - 1874.

Vols 7 - 14, 1865 - 1874. Vol. 13, 1872 - 73,
has an index.

Collections to Bombay Political Despatches.

Vols. 50 - 87, 1865 - 73.

L/P and S/7.

Political and Secret Correspondence with India, 1875
- 1911.

Political and Secret Enclosures received from India.

Vols. 1 - 97, (with index).

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Political and Secret Letters and Enclosures from
Bombay, 1875 - 1911.

Vols. 1 - 51, 1875 - 1905.

Political and Secret Despatches to India, 1875 -
1896.

Vols. 1 - 22 (1).

Political and Secret Despatches to Bombay 1875 -
1896.

Vols. 1 - 6 (1). All volumes are indexed.

L/P and S/8.

Demi Official Correspondence; First Series.

Demi official letters received in the Political
and Secret Department, with Minutes,
Memoranda, drafts and copies of letters sent.

Vols. 1 - 9, 1872 - 1911.

(1) From 1897 Despatches and Letters to India, (and
to Bombay) are bound with letters received from
India, (and from Bombay).

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Second Series.

Copies of Demi Official letters sent out, and
received by the Department with copies of
Minutes and Memoranda.

Vols. 1 - 3, June 1862 - 1894.

L/P and S/9.

Secret letters received from Aden, and other Areas
outside India, 1793 - 1874.

Vols. 42 - 47, 1865 - Dec. 1874.

Secret letters received from 1875 - 1911.

Vols. 2 - 11.

Political letters to Aden, and to other Areas outside
India.

Vol. 1, 1875 - 1896.

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Enclosures to Indian and Bombay despatches to
the Secretary of State have to be looked for in the

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following Registers (1) :-

Z/L/P and S/6/12, 1866 - 1874.

Z/L/P and S/7/1 , 1875 - 1888.

Z/L/P and S/7/15, 1889 - 1897.

The Political and Secret Department Registers and Indexes, beginning in 1897, cover not only the letters and despatches from and to, India, but also the letters from, and to, Aden, up to 1911.

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L/P and S/10.

Political and Secret Subject files, 1902 - 1931.

Included in this group are the files on the 'Aden Frontier Delimitation', (File 37/1905, in 5 parts, from 1901 - 1911); on 'Aden Protectorate : Turkish Aggression', 1904 - 1914, in two parts (File

(1) Enclosures with Despatches from India were kept separately, and used in the preparation of answers. The enclosures were then later bound in sets of ten or more enclosures, according to their size, and filed under the number of the Secretary of State's answering Despatch.

137/1904); and other files dealing with 'Aden hinterland affairs', with individual European travellers, with the contraband arms traffic, and with other South Arabian subjects.

L/P and S/18.

These Political and Secret Memoranda include some 24 Memoranda, prefixed by the letter 'B', on South Arabian and Somali Coast affairs, from 1885 - 1906. The more useful ones include:-

B 30. "Relations with the tribes in the vicinity of Aden, especially in reference to the Amir of Zhali", by Major F.M.Hunter and General J.W.Schneider, dated 1885.

B 136. 'Aden Demarcation' by Sir W.Lee Warner, 1902.

B 137 'Aden Demarcation' by Brigadier P.J. Maitland, 1902.

B 156. 'Aden Frontier Delimitation', a Foreign Office Memo, 1906.

L/P and S/20.

These are official books, pamphlets and reports, dealing with Aden, Africa, Arabia, Perim, Red Sea, Socotra and the Middle East. Out of 11, of general interest for the region, covering the period between 1894 and 1923, E/60, Colonel (then Captain) R.A.Wahab's 1891/92 Survey Report is of particular interest for local Anglo Ottoman relations and the limits of the British sphere of interest in the Yemen from 1890 - 1905.

R/20.

The Aden Archives, now in the India Office Library.

The Aden Archives were visited by Dr. A. Toussaint, Chief Archivist of Mauritius, after the Second World War. Virtually no work had, however, been done in classifying the material in the Archives, before the files were sent to the India Office Library in 1967. Throughout the period of research of some 1000 files, some were not available in the sequence in which they

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were required (1); there was, indeed, no sure means of knowing what sequence was the most suitable, since the files' contents were usually unindexed and unknown to Library staff. Some important series, such as those of the Annual Reports and the Annual Trade and Navigation Returns are incomplete. Some files were in poor condition, from termite, and other, damage (2), until repaired by the India Office Library. Reference to an original Aden Archives Index of 1905 (3) shows that some earlier files were removed (4); other files, from 1875, were marked as 'missing'; and one file of 1877 was '...eaten by white ants....' (5). A number of **Aden** Residency files on Somali Coast affairs were transferred to the Somali Coast in 1899.

- (1) E.g. AIA 1234 - the Administrative Report for 1895/96 - was still not available on 20.12.1971, but '...waiting to be repaired...'
 - (2) In some files the pencil marginal notes are so faded that they can only be read with difficulty if at all.
 - (3) 4/R/20/1.
 - (4) E.g. Aden Audit Files up to 1854.
 - (5) No. 763 Political Local, Part II.
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Private Papers and Microfilmed Papers,
India Office Library.

Argyll Papers. Microfilms of the 8th Duke's papers whilst Secretary of State for India. The original papers are at Inverary Castle.

Sir Hugh Barnes' Papers (1). Foreign Secretary, 1900 - 1903.

Lord Curzon's Papers. The series covering events from 1901 - 1905 have been used, when Lord Curzon was Governor General.

Lord Dufferin Papers. Microfilms of originals with the Marchioness (1).

Lord George Hamilton's Papers. As Secretary of State his correspondence with Lord Curzon is useful for the period 1901 - 1905.

Lord Kilbracken's Papers. As Sir Arthur Godley he was Permanent Secretary at the India Office (2).

Lord Lamington's Papers., covering the period while he was Governor of Bombay (2).

(1) = no material quoted in this thesis.

(2) = of little use for this thesis.

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Sir Walter Lawrence's Papers. 16 boxes of these papers were unsorted in the Library. Dr. R.J. Bingley however obtained Lawrence's final diary of 1902 for me to read, but there was no reference to Aden affairs or visitors.

Lord Northbrook's Papers, as Governor General were useful for the events of 1873 and for his attitude towards defending Aden.

Lord Salisbury's Papers. Microfilms of originals at Christ Church, Oxford (1).

Sir Richard Temple.(Governor of Bombay, 1877-1880) Papers.

Sir William Lee Warner's Papers.

I.(2). Public Record Office.

Foreign Office Papers (2); FO 78; The Ottoman Empire.

This series covers Anglo Ottoman interest in the Yemen, the Hadhramaut Coast, Dhofar, Socotra and the Somali Coast, as seen by the Foreign Office.

The files are particularly useful for details

(1) = no material quoted in this thesis.

(2) See 'The Records of the Foreign Office 1782 - 1939',

H.M.S.O. London, 1969.

on Anglo-Ottoman co-operation against French plans to occupy Shaikh Said from 1869 (1); for the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in 1873 (2); and for a contrast between British indecisiveness over the Egyptian occupation of the Somali Coast between 1869 - 1874 and British firmness against the Porte in the Yemen in 1873; for the British occupation of the Somali Coast from 1884 - 1888 (3); and for the Anglo-Ottoman Boundary Commission in 1902 - 1905 (4).

Other correspondence with Embassies, in Paris (FO 27), and in Rome, (FO 48) is useful during periods of British rivalry in the region with the French or the Italians.

FO 1:Abyssinia. Papers dealing with the Egyptian withdrawal before the Mahdi, in 1884, are of

(1) FO 78/5387 - FO 78/5388.

(2) FO 78/2753 - FO 78/2754.

(3) There are 4 Volumes in 1884, FO 78/3725 to /3728; and 7 Volumes in 1887.

(4) The series begins with FO 78/5242 covering January - May, 1902.

interest for developments on the Somali Coast (1).

Admiralty Records.

ADM 53 is the series covering the Logs of H.M. Warships. Information in the logs gives details of British naval behaviour on visits to coastal ports during sensitive local negotiations, illustrating how psychological pressure was sometimes applied.

ADM 127 covers the R.N. records of the East India Station.

The following files have some interest for this study:

ADM 127/11 1866 - 1870 Aden and the Red Sea.

127/34 Aden, Egypt and the Sudan 1883/84.

I (2) Public Record Office, Private Papers.

Arthur Balfour Papers (B.P.) PRO 30/60 (2)

(1) FO 1/31 Frontier Questions with Egypt 1884/85.

(2) PRO/30/60/49 Cabinet Papers & Confidential Points concerning India.

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Cromer Papers (Gr.P) PRO/633.

Vol.1, 1872 - 1873.

Vol.V, for correspondence with F.M.Hunter 1885/1886.

Granville Papers (Gr.P). PRO 30/29.

PRO 30/29/62 Correspondence with Gladstone Jan.73 - May,
1874.

PRO 30/29/51, Correspondence with Argyll, 1869 - 1873.

PRO 30/29/106, Correspondence with Lord Tenterden,
1871 - 1874.

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Hammond Papers (H.P.) FO 391.

FO 391/21 Letters ^{from} ~~to~~ Sir H.Elliot. 1866 - 1871.

/22 Letters ^{from} ~~to~~ Sir H. Elliot. 1872 - 1873.

Middleton Papers (St.John Broderick) PRO 30/67 (1).

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(1) No material quoted in this thesis.

I (3) British Museum - Private Papers (1).

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(4) National Library of Scotland.

Minto Papers (M.P). The papers of the ~~2nd Lord Elgin~~ 4th Earl of Minto.

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M 887, M 889, M 891, Arabia 1906 - 1908.

M 995 Correspondence with England and abroad, with
Minto's replies, 1905 - 1908.

M 999 Secretary of State, and Permanent Secretary, India
Office, to Minto, 1905 - June, 1906.

(1) These collections are of marginal interest for this
thesis.

(5) Miscellaneous.

Lansdowne Papers (of the 5th Marquess). Lord Lansdowne restricts access to authors commissioned to write for publication (1).

Argyll Papers. There is no record of any private political Journals or Diaries, recording Argyll's personal opinions on the Anglo-Ottoman confrontation in 1873, in the Muniment Room at Inverary Castle (2).

The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, has no collections of private naval papers of interest for developments in South Arabia during this period.

II (i) Printed Documentary Sources, British Museum, State Paper Room.

(a) Parliamentary Papers, and Reports of Parliamentary Debates, for the period. In particular, C 920, Parliamentary Papers Vol. LXXVI, p.405, of 1874,

(1) Correspondence with Lord Lansdowne in 1972/73.

(2) Correspondence with the Chamberlain of Argyll, April, 1973.

gives the official British account of 'Turkish proceedings in the Neighbourhood of Aden' in 1873.

(b) Trade Returns from Aden, 1867 - 1870 (1).

Aden Port Trust Administration Report up to 31st March 1901 (1).

(ii) Maps.

(a) The India Office Library Catalogue is W/L/P and S. The collection does not include all maps referred to in official correspondence, even when the map referred to is not bound in with the covering correspondence. The collection of maps in Drawer A of Map Cabinet No. 2 in Room 147 is, however, the most useful collection of maps on S.W. Arabia of the period; it includes some on the Somali Coast. It ranges from 'Tribes in the Neighbourhood of Aden', printed from Commander S.B.Haines sketch map of 1839 (A9), to the 1906 Map of the Aden Frontier, showing tribes within the new 'Aden frontier',

(1) These papers are kept in store outside London. The Aden Port Trust Report was published in Aden from 1910. The series from 1901/02 to 1908/09 are missing.

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(A92). The few maps sent with the Aden Archives in 1967 added nothing new to the India Office collection, for this period.

Lt.Col. G.S. Stevens' Map of the Ameerri Territory and adjacent country, 1880, sent as an enclosure to Bombay's Political Depatch No. 7 of 24.3.1881 (BSC, Vol. 19, Jan-Apr. 1881) - is a particularly useful early map, with Captain F.M. Hunter's Sketch Map of Amiri Country, printed at Poona in 1880 (A 70). These two maps show the small extent of the Amir of Dhala's control and the basis for Ottoman claims to control villages around Dhala, at the time of the first British visit to the area. The next important maps dealing with this subject are Capt. R.A.Wahab's 'Survey of the Tribal Country around Aden' of 1893 (A 73), and his 1892 Map showing the distribution of the Tribes round Aden (A 74).

The British Museum Map room has copies of maps also in the India Office Library (1).

- (1) E.g. IOL Map A 9 (Haines sketch map of 1839, referred to above) is 49215 (2) in the BM.

III CONTEMPORARY, AND LATER, BOOKS OF BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY, REFERENCE AND TRAVEL (1).

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Cairo, 1936.

(1) References in square brackets refer to abbreviations
used in the notes, where the book is referred to more
than once. A few books referred to in the footnotes
on minor points have been omitted; and a few others,
not mentioned in the text, which provide useful
contemporary, or local, views are included.

SIR EVELYN BARING, see Cromer.

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IV Magazine Articles, and other miscellaneous sources.

The Journals of the Royal United Service Institute provide useful contemporary information, of particular use on defence matters.

The Geographical Journal, Vol. LIV, No. 6, of December 1919 has an article, 'Reminiscences of the Map of Arabia and the Persian Gulf' by Lt. Col. F.Fraser Hunter.

T.A.Heathcote's Ph.D. Thesis on 'British Policy and Baluchistan, 1854 - 1876' provides examples of Sir W. Merewether's actions in Baluchistan, for comparison with his behaviour against the Fadhliis in 1865 - 67 (1).

Other material obtained in the Yemen and in Hadhramaut includes records of conversations, the Al Ba Alwi Agreement between the Seiyids of Hadhramaut, and copies of official Handing Over Notes in the Aden Protectorate.

(1) Ph.D. Thesis, London University, 1969/70 Index.

The United Society for Propagating the Gospel (U.S.P.G.) has religious papers with some articles on missionary work and journies in the Yemen and on the Somali Coast towards the end of this period.

14.1 - 14.5 Diagram

A A Tribal Confederation.

B The Senior Residency Staff,
1865-1905.

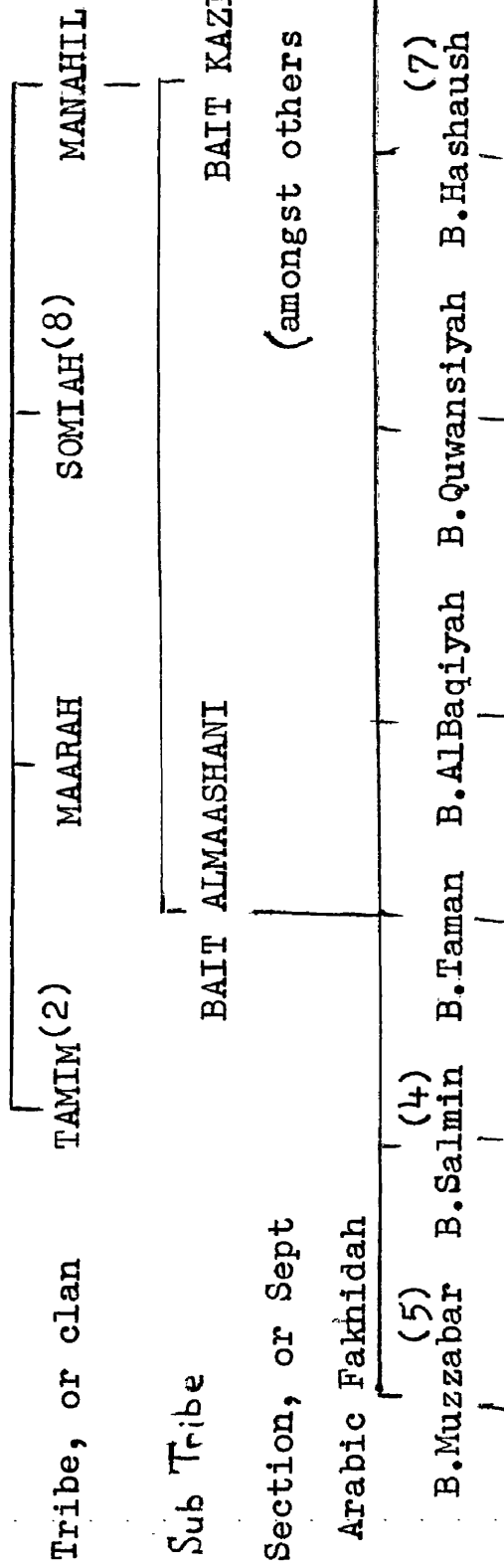
C Causes of vessels calling at
Aden, 1875-1895.

Diagram A

A Tribal Confederation(1)

Confederation

The Banu Dhannah Confederation



Families

Separate family groups, with married sons' families often camping beside their parents.

- (1) This confederation is based on a claimed common ancestry. Most Yemeni confederations with which this thesis is concerned did not have a common ancestry.
- (2) Historically an old and prominent South Arabian tribe with families claiming to be Tamimis found throughout Arabia from Lebanon southwards, but particularly settled in the Aared area of Nejd. Palgrave 'Arabia' p.272-3.
The Tamimi leader was the nominal head of the confederation. Such a confederation could feud within itself at times.
- (3) The Muqaddam of all the Manahil was the head of the Bait Ghanim section of the Bait Kazim sub-tribe.
- (4) The Bait Salmin provided the Muqaddam of the Bait ALMaashani sub-tribe in place of Bait Hashaush - See 1.8.
- (5) Wehr (p.699) gives for a section but is colloquial South Arabian usage.
- (6) Originally from the Murra tribe but adopted into the tribe. Living in some degree of isolation, they retain dialect differences in their speech.
- (7) See Introduction page
- (8) A client tribe according to Bukheit bin Salim ALManhali. Notes to writer Aden 1966.

Source Material. p.22-25 Tribes of the Eastern Aden Protectorate, Roneoed at Mukalla, Hadhramaut, in 1961. (Hereafter E.A.P. Tribes) (Notes dictated by Al Bukheit bin Salim bin Laksar of the Bait Atoni section of the Manahil in Aden 1966.)

The Senior Residency Staff, 1865-1905.

1865 70 75 80 85 90 95 1900 05



Resident
First Assistant
Other Staff
On leave
On sick leave
In Abyssinia
Posted to Zanzibar z

Sources:- Aden reports and files and India Office Lists

Diagram CTable showing Major Causes of Vessels Calling at Aden1875 - 1895

| | <u>Called to Coal</u> | <u>Called to take on /discharge cargo</u> | | <u>Called for prov'ns or water</u> | <u>Called for Repairs</u> | <u>Called for Orders</u> |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | <u>Steamers</u> | <u>Sailing Vessels</u> | | | |
| 1875/76 | 304 | 477 | 37 | n.s.s. | n.s.s. | n.s.s. |
| 77 | 314 | 412 | 36 | n.s.s. | n.s.s. | n.s.s. |
| 78 | 406 | 415 | n.s.s. | 21 | 9 | 12 |
| 79 | 326 | 431 | n.s.s. | 28 | 2 | 5 |
| 80 | 326 | 456 | n.s.s. | 32 | 10 | n.s.s. |
| 81 | 498 | (495 +18 (1) | | 17 | 8 | n.s.s. |
| 82 | 591 | 554 | n.s.s. | 25 | 16 | 10 |
| 83 | 749 | 40.81% + 8 (1) | n.s.s. | 19 | 8 | 31 |
| 84 | 834 | 732 | 5 | 38 | 9 | 18 + 1 sail- ing ship |
| 85 | 535 | 730 | 6 | 35 | 8 | 14 |
| 86 | 548 | 772 | 3 | 41 | 11 | 14 |
| (3) 87 | 33% | 56.6% + .34% (1) | n.s.s. | 8% | .6%(2) | .4%(2) |
| (3) 88 | 35.5% | 56% +1.15%(1) | n.s.s. | 3.13% | .5%(2) | .5%(2) |
| (3) 89 | 37.96% | 53.37% +2.16%(1) | n.s.s. | 2.21% | 1.08% | .38% |
| (3) 90 | 34.11% | 55.87% +2.18%(1) | n.s.s. | 2.79% | .55% | .35% |
| (3) 91 | 29.92% | 55.51% +2.31%(1) | n.s.s. | 3.01% | .35% | 1.54% |
| 92 | 481 | 830 + 28 (1) | n.s.s. | 38 | 3 | 31 |
| 93 | 356 | 854 + 11 (1) | n.s.s. | 33 | 5 | 12 |
| 94 | 307 | 949 | No ships | 8 | 7 | 5 |
| 1894/95 | 298 | 969 | No ships | 14 | 7 | 8 |

n.s.s. = no separate statistics

Diagram CNotes

- (1) Described as 'Entered to land or embark passengers'.
- (2) Printed without the decimal point.
- (3) Calculations do not come out to the full 100%:
they are therefore only a guide: after 5 years the
figures were no longer expressed in percentages.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----|--|
| AAR | Aden Annual Report, followed by its' year from 1st April - 31st March. |
| AIA | Aden file numbers in 10L. |
| ADM | Admiralty prefix for files in PRO. |
| AF | Aden file number obtained in Aden before removal to London. |
| AM | Microfilms of 8th Duke of Argyll's papers, 10L. |
| BM | British Museum. |
| BP | Arthur Balfour Papers, BM. |
| BSC | Bombay Secret Correspondence, 10L. |
| CrP | Papers of Sir Evelyn Baring, Lord Cromer, BM. |
| CP | Curzon Papers. |
| DO | Demi official (letter) |
| EAP | Eastern Aden Protectorate |
| fi | for information |
| FO | Foreign Office |

| | |
|--------------|---|
| G of I | Government of India |
| G.P. | W.E. Gladstone Papers, BM |
| Gr.P. | Granville Papers, PRO |
| HBMA | Her Britannic Majesty's Ambassador |
| HP | Hammond Papers, PRO |
| Lord HP | Lord George Hamilton's Papers |
| IO | India Office |
| IOL | India Office Library |
| KP | Kilbracken Papers (Godley, PS, 10) |
| LA (LA,M,PG) | Letters from Aden, IOL |
| LB | Letters from Bombay, IOL |
| LI | Letters from India, IOL |
| LP | Lord Lamington Papers, IOL |
| LW(P) | Sir William Lee-Warner Papers, IOL |
| NLS | National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh |
| NP | Northbrook Papers, IOL. |
| MM | 6th Earl Mayo Microfilms, IOL |
| MP | Lord Minto Papers NLS |

| | |
|--------|---|
| PD | Political Department, or, Parliamentary Debates, SPR, BM |
| PSD | Political & Secret Department, 10 |
| PRO | Public Records Office, London |
| PS | Permanent Secretary, Foreign, or India Offices |
| P & S | Political & Secret |
| RA | Resident Adviser |
| Res. | Resident, Aden |
| SCAR | Somali Coast Annual Report |
| SGB | Secretary to Government of Bombay, Political and Secret Department; post changed to Chief Secretary in 1876 |
| SM | Lord Salisbury Microfilms IOL (Originals at Christ Church, Oxford) |
| SPR | State Paper Room, BM |
| S of S | Secretary of State, India Office |
| U/S | Permanent Under Secretary at India, or Foreign, Offices |
| USPG | United Society for Propagating the Gospel, 15 Tufton Street, London SW1 |